

the defenestrator

issue 34 August 2006



LOS CABALLOS NEGROS SON.
LAS HERRADURAS SON NEGRAS.
SOBRE LAS CAPAS RELUCEN
MANCHAS DE TINTA Y DE CERA.
TIENEN, POR ESO NO LLORAN,
DE PLOMO LAS CALAVERAS.
CON EL ALMA DE CHAROL
VIENEN POR LA CARRETERA.

Black are their
horses. Black are
the hooves.

Wrapped in stained
capes glistening
with ink and wax,
they have, and so
weep not, skulls
cast of bullet lead.

Souls as black as
their helmets, they
gallop down the
street

JOROBADOS Y NOCTURNOS,
POR DONDE ANÍMAN ORDENAN
SILENCIOS DE GOMA OSCURA
Y MIEDOS DE FINA ARENA.
PASAN, SI QUIEREN PASAR,
Y OCULTAN EN LA CABEZA
UNA VAGA ASTRONOMÍA
DE PISTOLAS INCONCRETAS.

hunchbacked and
nocturnal

animating the order
of silence of dark
rubber and fears of
fine sand

they do what they
please and hidden in
their heads

a vague astronomy
of phantom pistols

from Garcia Lorca's "Ballad of the Spanish Civil Guard"

inside:

**Robin Hood Gang Robs the Rich * the Zapatista's Other Campaign * Control Unit Torture *
Philly and Sustainability * Notes on the Uprising in France * V for Vendetta * Philadelphia's
Anti-Displacement Solidarity Committee * Defenestrator files a FOIA**



The defenestrator is Philly's sporadic newspaper for resistance, creative revolution and action. To defenestrate Power means total refusal of its tools and tentacles. Like the Hussites who had their oppressors thrown down from the Prague castle into the angry mob below, the defenestrator wrestles power and privilege from its highest and most protected strongholds and casts the beast out of the window and down into the angry hands of the people.

Prison Staff! Caution ! Protected Private Property

This newspaper remains property of the sender unless it has been personally and materially accepted by the prisoner to whom it has been addressed. In the event that the prisoner is denied direct access to this publication, it must be returned to the sender with notice of reasons for failing to deliver to addressee.

Distribute defenestrator outside of Philly!
The defenestrator is free in Philly. Outside of Philly, send \$2 per issue postage paid. If you care to distribute this fine paper, you can get 10 or more for 80 cents each. We ask you sell them for no more than \$1.50 a piece.

Get on the defenestrator email list!
We send out announcements for demonstrations, emergency mobilizations, benefit events and defenestrator events. If you want on, send a blank email from your address to defenestrator-subscribe@lists.riseup.net or click the link on our website. The list is low traffic (usually about 1 message a week) and easy to get off if you so choose.

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First Female Conscientious Objectors Sentenced for Refusing Deployment to Afghanistan

FT. BENNING, GA – Army National Guard Specialist Katherine Jashinski received a bad conduct discharge today and was sentenced to 120 days confinement after pleading guilty to the charge of “refusal to obey a legal order.” She was acquitted of the more serious charge of “missing movement by design.” With 53 days already served (on Fort Benning), and 20 days off for good behavior, Ms. Jashinski has 47 days of confinement remaining.

On November 17, 2005, Jashinski made a public statement of conscientious objection on the eve of her

scheduled deployment to Afghanistan. Eighteen months after filing, the Army denied her application for a discharge. She was then court-martialed for refusing to train with weapons.

Jashinski's superiors testified that they believed in the sincerity of her CO claim, and the Judge noted that he was convinced of the same.

Aidan Delgado and Camilo Mejia, members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, attended Ms. Jashinski's trial today to support her. They described the atmosphere of the courtroom as initially tense, but said that Jashinski's powerful heartfelt testimony

changed the tone of the room. “Iraq Veterans Against the War supports the right of every soldier to follow their conscience,” said Delgado. “As the first woman GI to publicly take a stand against this war and to declare herself a CO, Katherine's actions are very significant. She is a fine example of a young person standing up for her beliefs.”

Ms. Jashinski is feeling triumphant and happy to have resolution. After completing her sentence she will return to school at the University of Texas at Austin and continue her work with the newly founded Austin GI Rights Hotline

REBEL WITH A CAUSE



FREE KATHERINE!

www.codepinkalert.org

Sports and Resistance

“If I can't play soccer, I don't want to be part of your revolution.”
- Emma Goldman

Rebels and anti-capitalists the world over have soccer leagues in their cities. Why not Philly? Futbol would give us a chance to break down barriers that separate us in our community organizing, plus we'd have crazy fun (friendly competition, not slaughtering each other).

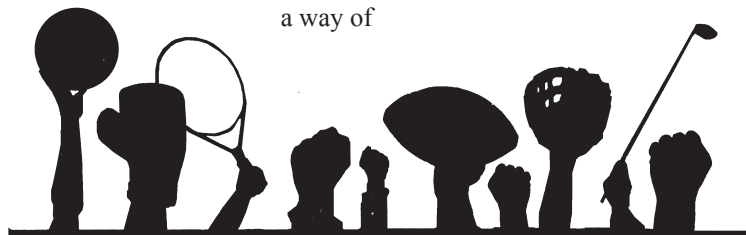
We don't see this as a distraction
from our work for social
change. It's
a way of

bringing conscious people together who may not otherwise come in contact.

Teams are now forming. You can start one with your organization or just a group of friends.

If you're interested send a message to John Prisk: jgp@riseup.net

Don't worry, it won't be like your high-school gym class. The assholes who ruined the fun for the rest of us wouldn't want to play in this league anyway!



SOLIDARITY FUNDS NEEDED FOR CANADIAN COMRADE!

“Any movement that does not support its political internees is a sham movement.”

– Ojore Lutalo, US political prisoner

Last June at the international Food Not Bombs Gathering/ Reclaim the Commons events, Guillaume Beaulieu from Quebec was arrested during a protest near the Philadelphia Convention Center. He was later scapegoated for the death of a Civil Affairs cop who died of a heart attack, and found guilty of 3 misdemeanors: disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and conspiracy.

This past Monday, a judge handed down the absolute maximum penalty- short of prison- at Guillaume's sentencing. He got a 6-12 month suspended prison sentence, 250 hours of community service, and \$10,480 in fines. The fine must be paid in 6 months. This extreme sentencing is just within legal guidelines, so Guillaume most likely does not have grounds for appeal. A fine that high is effectively a sentence of state-mandated wage-slavery, but we won't let Guillaume go it alone!

HE NEEDS FUNDS RAISED NOW!

Please send whatever donations you can afford to:

Philly ABC P.O. Box 42129
Philadelphia, PA 19101
Organize fundraisers in your hometown! All donations can be sent to the above address.

LAVA

Philly's center for radical media and politics, the Lancaster Avenue Autonomous space has been undergoing some considerable growth in the last months. Now with regular hours and several events a week ranging from films to speakers to workshops to techno parties, LAVA is hoppin. In recent months Geoclan has started moving in, Food Not Bombs have been cooking up a storm and this coming month we'll be welcoming the Taxi Workers Alliance into our fold.

We've also been working on keeping the defenestrator office staffed Wednesday nights from 7pm onwards as part of the LAVA open hours, so if you've ever been interested in plugging in, by all means drop by!

Keep up on LAVA happenings at lava-zone.org!

LAVA is open every Wednesday from 4-9pm or Sundays 1-6pm and is located at 4134 Lancaster Ave. in West Philly.

Robin Hood Gang Robs Gourmet Stores in Bid to Feed Hamburg's

by Tony Paterson

Last week the well-heeled citizens of Hamburg's Altona district got a taste of their antics when 30 of them marched into the city's luxury "Fresh Paradise Goedecken" supermarket and walked out five minutes later with €15,000 (£10,000) worth of stolen goods.

The gang's booty included magnums of Champagne at €99 a bottle, filets of Japanese Kobe beef at €108 a kilogram, legs of venison, a salmon and several boxes of Valrhona chocolate.

Before leaving, gang members thrust a bouquet of flowers into the hands of a shop assistant. Attached was a handwritten note which proclaimed: "Survival in the city of millionaires would be impossible without us!" It was signed by "Spider Mum", "Santa Guevara" and "Multiflex".

Another note later released by the gang insisted that the haul had been distributed to Hamburg's needy, to the "social workers, cleaning ladies and minimum-wage earners". It added: "The places of wealth in this town are as numerous as the opportunities to take it."

"It was a well-planned robbery," Carsten Sievers, the store's manager, said on Friday last week. "Somebody had obviously been in the shop before the main contingent arrived and had already filled up several shopping trolleys."

Fourteen squad cars and a police helicopter scoured the Altona district for more than an hour after the robbery, but failed to find the perpetrators.

"The gang covered its tracks completely. They act like professionals," Bodo Franz, the head of a Hamburg police unit investigating the robbery, said.

As they left the scene of the robbery, the gang, clad in masks, catsuits, dark glasses and rubber masks, posed for a group photo outside the supermarket and brandished their booty in front of the camera.

The incident was the latest attack perpe-

trated by this Robin Hood-style gang of so-called "Spontis", whose activities have alarmed and baffled the Hamburg police and the city's well-to-do. Yet the gang, which refers to itself as "Hamburg for Free", does not strike often. Its last attack took place almost exactly a year ago, when 40 masked men and women stormed the Süllberg res-

taurant and started stuffing the stolen food into their mouths. Other gang members brandished a huge knife and fork made out of silver foil and cardboard above the diners' heads. A placard declaring "The fat years are over" was strung between pillars in the restaurant.



taurant in the city's wealthy Blankenese district overlooking the river Elbe.

Diners were appalled as the gang snatched titbits from the plates in front of them

job to catch."

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Katrina Volunteers Head to Lebanon

from www.infoshop.org

A number of Katrina volunteers have organized into a new organization named "Critical Response" in order to provide emergency response to disasters, both natural and human-made. Critical Response is working to send a rescue and relief team into Southern Lebanon to assist with humanitarian aid efforts. The Critical Response team will go into areas that are not currently being served adequately by relief organizations due to the high risks involved.

As was the case in New Orleans, innocent civilians in Southern Lebanon are being sentenced to death through delayed relief efforts. Critical Response is asking for ideas and help by networking from people of conscience.

In addition to rescue and relief operations in Lebanon, the Critical Response team will develop networks and an infrastructure to enable other American civilians to provide assistance to residents and other aid groups throughout the region. There are plans to organize travel and training assistance for those who would like to be a part of humanitarian relief in the region. Critical Response will also join with the region's independent media presence to show a fair and balanced picture of what is happening on the ground in this region.

According to Brandon Darby, co-founder of Critical Response, "Critical Response wants to provide aid and not take sides in this political struggle on a governmental level. Personal views cannot be allowed to minimize the ability to help innocents. When groups of powerful men cannot get along, the rest of us are not absolved from our responsibility to ensure that children have water, food, and medical supplies."

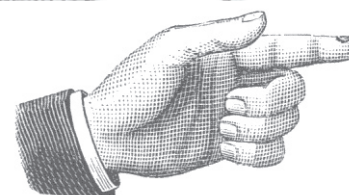
For more information, contact Caroline Heldman at (562) 587-4229 or visit our website at www.commongroundresponse.org.

Repression of Food Not Bombs Chapters

Dear community,

Food Not Bombs and the people they are feeding are having trouble with local authorities in four cities in North America. Food Not Bombs chapters in Venice, California; Las Vegas, Nevada; Orlando Florida and Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada have been told that their programs should stop or move out of sight. The crisis of war and poverty has never been so bad and efforts to find solutions to these urgent problems should be supported more than ever. Over 2,500 soldiers have died in Iraq and tens of thousands of our veterans are living in America's streets yet these four city governments are spending their money and time trying to silence the very group that is feeding the hungry and working for peace. Please let each Food Not Bombs group know that you support their right to share food and literature and consider organizing a protest in your community. This type of solidarity was effective in ending the campaign of police violence against San Francisco Food Not Bombs in the 80's and 90's. The city of San Francisco spent more than \$25 million and the group is still busy feeding the hungry and working for peace. Orlando City Council plans to bring up this issue on Monday, June 19th so please email their offices letters of support as soon as you can. Their contact information can be found at the end of this email.

Thanks,
Keith McHenry
co-founder of the Food Not Bombs movement



The Future of a City: Is Philly Sustainable?

By Bronwyn Lepore

We cannot solve the environmental crisis without solving social problems.

Radical Ecologist Murray Bookchin,
1921-2006

It's time to go on the offensive. We must rise to the challenge of playing the real "great game," which is to reassert democratic control over the flow of capital and make the shift from an economy based on extraction and exploitation to one based on restoration and equity.

Patrick Reinsborough "Global Ecology! Global Democracy! Now!" (2002)

In his recent book *The Long Emergency* (2005), journalist James Howard Kunstler defines how the energy crisis created by reaching global oil-production peak (which he estimates will occur around 2010) "will change everything about how we live...we will have to accommodate ourselves to fundamentally changed conditions." Kunstler describes how our (U.S.) over-reliance on cheap fossil fuel, the wastefulness of suburban sprawl, an irresponsible government/media (that by turns worsens and ignores the problem) coupled with the "sleepwalking" nature of most Americans - "lost in dark raptures of nonstop infotainment, recreational shopping and compulsive motoring" - has pushed us to the edge of a cliff. Hanging on by threads of, at best, limited possibilities for alternative energy resources; we must change our ways in order to survive. "This is going to be a permanent energy crisis," writes Kunstler. "And these energy problems will synergize with the disruptions of climate change, epidemic disease and population overshoot to produce higher orders of trouble." In response, Kunstler believes, we will be forced to become more locally sustainable - agriculturally and product-wise. We will have to restore our rail system and accept the diminished use of cars and super highways. Travel will be extremely limited. (And these are his positive scenarios). In short, we will have to reimagine life.

"We will not believe that this is happening to us, that 200 years of modernity can be brought to its knees by a world-wide power shortage," writes Kunstler. "The

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survivors will have to cultivate a reli-

gion of hope -- that is, a deep and comprehensive belief that humanity is worth carrying on. If there is any positive side to stark changes coming our way, it may be in the benefits of close communal relations, of having to really work intimately (and physically) with our neighbors, to be part of an enterprise that really matters and to be fully engaged in meaningful social enactments instead of merely being entertained to avoid boredom."

Hope is a word that Jaime Lerner, city planner and former mayor of Curitiba, Brazil, the world's most ecologically sustainable city, used many times during an incredibly well-attended (hopeful in itself) talk he gave last Spring for the Urban Sustainability Forum (USF) at the Pennsylvania Academy of Natural Sciences entitled "The City is not the Problem; It's the Solution." And it is to people like Lerner, a practicing optimist, and places like Curitiba (as well as projects already started or growing in Philadelphia, and to ourselves) that we need to look to find hope and gather ideas for taking action. Kunstler's earlier, *The Geography of Nowhere: the Rise and Decline of America's Man-made Landscape* (1993) offers similar call outs to re-imagine and reinvent healthier, more environmentally sound, directly democratic communities and ways of living.

Lerner spoke out against pessimism and wastefulness and for co-responsibility, political will, democratic practice (all inhabitants of a city should be included in decision-making), solidarity, collective awareness, and strategy in attaining urban sustainability and quality of life. Paralysis, he argued, is the worst scenario for a city which can and should be a vibrant center of life, creativity and flexibility, with respect to tradition and cultural identity. He identified three key elements of the sustainable city: a good, self-sustaining, affordable public transport system as well as bicycle friendliness (if he had his way, there would be no cars in the city...recalling, for me, pleasant visits in Groningen, Holland, a city which does not allow cars in the town's center, and where, refreshingly, cyclists, pedestrians and the occasional bus, rule) an emphasis on the environment (with lots of accessible city parks) and a genuine concern for and focus on a city's youth. In Curitiba, for example, children learn recycling early on in school so it becomes second nature. An amazing 70% of waste is recycled there. And Lerner always makes sure to get ideas from young people and to create positive spaces for them. Philadelphia could stand a lot of improvement in this

area. Youth programs are often the first to go when cuts are made, and our public school system, as is well-documented in Jonathon Kozol's *The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America* (2005), is a shambles of social and racial inequality.

When Lerner looks at a city in order to plan improvements for its overall health, he applies what he calls "urban acupuncture," asking: How can the city improve mobility? Where and what things are stuck, unhealthy, and not flowing? What would improve the flow? How can neighborhoods be rehabilitated (increasing energy flow and health) rather than demolished (which creates waste, destroys history and identity and is costly) to benefit those already living there? Just as in acupuncture, the practitioner must listen carefully and respectfully to the patient for treatment to succeed. It's a kind of mutually beneficial social relationship, quite different from, say, going to an emergency room for treatment, though such triage, Kunstler implies, will likely be necessary too. "The survival of the Earth is inextricably linked to the policies of our cities," writes Lerner, "which is where the majority of our ecological problems now originate. Our planet would benefit greatly if every city, large or small, were to adopt environmentally friendly policies."

So how does Philadelphia measure up to Lerner's sustainability goals? What's vital and healthy about our city and what needs improvement? What outlook does Kunstler offer for the sustainability of such an urban environment?

At USF's Town Hall meeting "Goals and Actions for a Sustainable Philadelphia: A Sustainability Agenda" on June 15, Warren Karlenzig of Sustainlane, an on-line community that promotes healthy, sustainable "lifestyles," discussed Philadelphia's ranking in their 2006 benchmark study of America's fifty largest cities, which issued "report cards" of each city's commitment to quality of life: public health, environmental sustainability and local economy. Surprisingly, Philadelphia ranked 8th overall in the nation, scoring high in things like public transport use and city commuting (carpooling, walking and biking to work - as cities go we are actually pretty bike-friendly, with lots of bike lanes), number of community gardens (a whopping 468!) and farmer's markets, affordable housing and green space. On a less positive note, we ranked 2nd worst in recycling, have really poor overall air quality (in case you hadn't noticed) and 0% of city energy resources are renewable. As with other cities across the country, and in contradiction to the Clinton and Bush administrations, Philadelphia has signed onto the Kyoto Treaty (a commitment to reduce greenhouse emissions - principally Carbon Dioxide - the U.S.

was one of the few industrialized nations not to sign) and a group of organizations working together under the Next Great City Initiative (with a goal of becoming the country's most sustainable city by 2016) is actively pushing a green agenda. Some other cities worth looking at for emphasizing sustainability are Portland (no. 1), Austin, San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago, and, oddly enough, Las Vegas, where 50% of vehicles run on alternative fuel.

Quaker William Penn was "granted" (despite the Lenapee tribes already inhabiting the area) the huge parcel of land that is Pennsylvania in 1682 by Charles II who considered England well rid of a contentious group. Penn, who designed Philly's grid system, with its tree-named streets, was big on preserving lots of city green space in order to discourage the disease and pestilence rampant in over-crowded European cities. The largest city park in the country, Fairmount Park now includes 9,100 acres and attention to horticulture has always been emphasized here. Once an intellectual center and industrial hub, Philadelphia, like many other urban areas, was hit hard in the 1970's when President Reagan, in search of cheap labor markets to satisfy corporate cronies and conservative Republicans angry at the rise in labor rights and, particularly, of the growing voice and power of an African-American middle-class, shut down factories and industry and shipped them overseas where cheaper labor could be exploited. "White flight" to the suburbs (a move which, as Kunstler and others have pointed out, cost dearly in terms of resource-sucking) was so rampant that the city went from a population of 2.1 million in 1950 to less than 1.6 million (interestingly the same pop. as Curitiba) in 2006. Many areas of the city were abandoned and economically devastated.

Only recently have people started moving back into the city (perhaps in part out of fear of sky-rocketing fuel prices), but often this means "revitalization" or gentrification of formerly affordable neighborhoods where lower-income people are forced out and yuppies are encouraged by incentives like 10-year tax abatements. (See Philly Incite/Philly IMC article/web-site for more info about what's up with eminent domain and other "gentrification" issues). Lower-income areas are also more likely to be sites of environmental racism/classism (as in Philly's Gray's Ferry neighborhood that suffers one of the city's highest cancer rates). Asthma rates have risen consistently. Just a week or so ago noxious smells from the Sunoco Oil Refinery were apparent on a hot summer night; they get fined, but can afford it, while many can't afford the health care necessary to treat consequent health problems. Lerner emphasizes how a city must

☞ continued on page 8

The Community Leadership Institute and INCITE

Philadelphia's Anti-Displacement Solidarity Committee; Origins and Current

From allforthetaking.org

During its first seven years of existence, CLI received funding through the city, in coordination with the American Street Empowerment Zone.

(Empowerment Zones are geographical areas 'established to foster economic development in distressed rural and urban communities' that were established through a competitive process to attract federal funding.)



Then, in April 2001, Philadelphia Mayor John Street unveiled the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI), perhaps the first urban renewal project of the 21st century. Although NTI began with cosmetic changes designed to garner resident support (such as a city-sponsored clean up of abandoned cars), the true end-game of NTI is a massive facelift for the entire city, predicated upon class-remake of many poor neighborhoods in order to stimulate private sector investment, increase the city's tax base, and push Philadelphia toward a more competitive rank in the global economy.

A cornerstone of the plan is attracting new development into Philadelphia neighborhoods through demolition of existing structures, land clearance and assembling parcels of land ready for development. This process is facilitated by a 10 year tax abatement on new construction and other developer grants and incentives. In NTI's first phase, 5,000 properties were targeted for demolition, about 250 of these owner-occupied.

Shortly after the plans were announced, several Philadelphia neighborhoods, including CLI's neighborhood of West

Kensington, began to feel the sting of NTI. Philadelphia's Redevelopment Authority (the property acquisition arm of NTI) announced plans to acquire and demolish the properties of seven families

on Bodine Street. CLI organizers rapidly turned their attention to helping residents fight the forced taking of their properties, and their

funding through the Empowerment Zone was immediately terminated.

Since early 2002, the Community Leadership Institute has been unique among the precious few poor-led groups in our city that has successfully organized to fight the forced displacement of poor people from Philadelphia neighborhoods, participating on a campaign to ensure a \$15 million housing trust fund to support low income housing in the city (as a former member of the Philadelphia Affordable Housing Coalition), organizing block leadership to become experts in housing policy and eminent domain abuse, and taking on cases in the streets and in the courts on an individual, block, and neighborhood basis to strengthen organizing and help residents feel confident enough to fight. One of CLI's members, eighty-year-old Veronica Howard, who became involved after her own house was threatened, recently won the right to remain in her property after her case made it all the way to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

As the focus of their work changed, CLI became a beacon for residents throughout the city who began to receive notices that their properties were wanted. Its own membership greatly expanded to reflect

the incredible diversity of their neighborhood base, with not only Latinos with roots in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, but also African Americans, Bosnians and other Eastern Europeans joining in. Despite their accomplishments and the threat they posed to the city power structure as a multi-racial united group of poor people, CLI remained a tiny organization with only two staff members, operating on a shoe string budget. When I first sat down with Rosemary Cubas about 10 months ago to discuss my research and the needs of CLI, I did not yet know that she was also engaged in what would be a losing battle with cancer.

The Work of the ADSC

The anti-displacement solidarity committee has a mission to support the work of CLI and the growing network of neighborhood groups that CLI has supported to become educated and active in the fight to preserve Philadelphia's neighborhoods as places where poor people can live and even own their own homes. One of the amazing things about our city is that there are approximately 92,000 homeowners in Philadelphia who are living on less than \$20,000 a year. Many of these are elderly residents who have owned their homes for decades and who are really a product of Philadelphia's long-ago industrial economy. Nevertheless, it is unthinkable in most large U.S. cities to own property even if you are middle class, and the fact that there is still a relatively high rate of homeownership among Philadelphia's poor people is one of the greatest assets our city has.

Our work is grounded in political education about the macro-level forces that are bringing about the changes in Philadelphia and other cities – the relationships between neo-liberal globalization, the dismantling of social safeguards, and

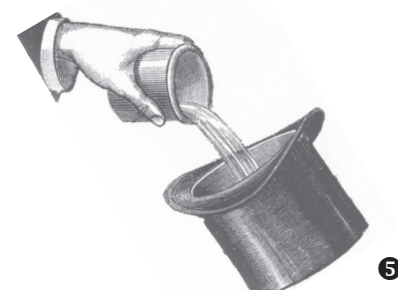
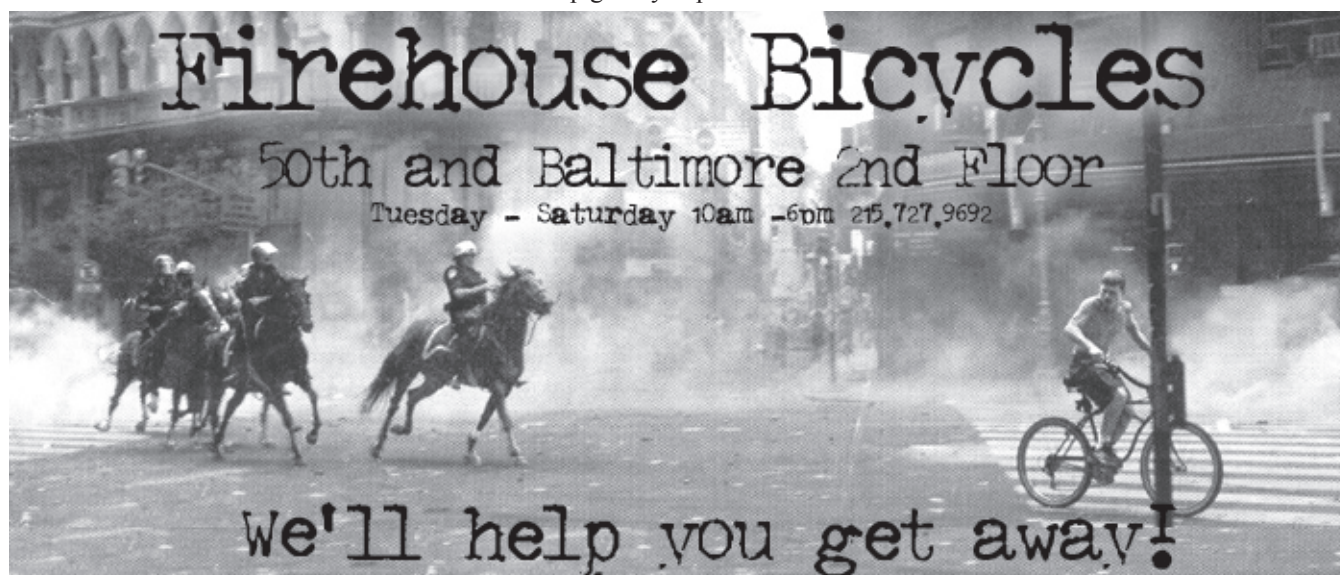
the devolution of federal responsibility to cities, that result in fierce competition among metropolitan areas for business investment and high-income residents to support city budgets. Housing policy has followed these trends by the dismantling of large public housing towers throughout the country under the Hope VI program. These towers increasingly came to be seen by the power elite as barriers to private investment in neighborhoods.

The new ideology of 'low-income' housing is that it can actually be used to stimulate housing market values and private investment in the surrounding communities. This is done by severely decreasing the density (new developments in Philadelphia include many 'ranch-style' homes with garages and driveways) and targeting the not-quite poor (most new 'low-income' developments in Philadelphia are targeted toward families with incomes of between \$40,000 and \$70,000) while still managing to fit federal and local guidelines for tax credits and other development grants.

Our work is grounded in the belief that the fight against these policies must be led by those who are most directly affected, with the support of allies. We assist CLI and their growing network in concrete ways by:

- Providing basic technical support such as the construction of databases and listserves
- Making community contacts to link to the network
- Producing outreach materials for use at community meetings and forums
- Making connections between housing activists and researchers/scholars who can help decipher the complicated re-development plans and blight certifications.
- Accompaniment of residents to meetings to assist them to advocate for themselves

For the members of the ADSC, the committee has functioned as a place to become politically educated, to experience the fusion of theory and practice that is a hallmark of effective organizing work, and to go through a 'loss of innocence' regarding the struggles of poverty as experienced through the fight for housing in the city of Philadelphia.





Control Units: High Tech Brutality

by Robert X. Holbrook

The purpose of isolation and sensory deprivation is to disrupt one's balance, inner equilibrium, to dehumanize, to strip away the prisoner's unique individuality. -Dr. Mutulu Shakur

A prisoner's whole existence, especially one in a control unit, is defined by numbers, statistics, and information transferred through an endless process of paperwork. When I go to the Program Review Committee here in the Special Management Unit (a control unit) at SCI Greene, my release to general population is repeatedly denied, they claim, because of a history of assaultive behavior. It is useless to defend myself against their rationale, yet I do to probe the predictable response of my captors.

Their justification for the continual confinement of myself and others in the SMU is based on the rational of a separate committee that determined I am an assaultive prisoner who has demonstrated the potential to harm others. Never mind the fact that this determination was made in another prison. Since a separate Administrative Committee determined that I am assaultive, I must therefore be assaultive. Their system of paperwork and statistics is never wrong; their committees are omnipotent and all knowing.

We the prisoners are mere spectators and captives to the process. Our presence is only necessary to secure our signatures on their paperwork or to say something that can be documented and used against us in future hearings. Our signatures place our consent on their paperwork. They permit us to seal our fate by certifying our consent of their process.

Every step of our day in the control unit is reduced to a methodical and omnipotent numbers system. I am housed in cell 23 on the 2nd tier. I receive 3 meals a day, 3 showers a week for 5 minutes each with 1 bar of soap, and 3 shaves a week with 1 razor that must be turned in after 15 minutes. I go to the yard 5 days a week for 1 hour a day with 1 prisoner per cage. I can only have 1 box in my cell containing only 2 pairs of socks, 2 t-shirts and 2 underwear. I can only have 4 books that must be exchanged on a 1 for 1 basis.

I can only have 1 jumpsuit, 1 towel, 1 washcloth, and 1 toothbrush and toothpaste that are exchanged every 30 days on a 1 for 1 basis. I can only have 1 visit for 1 hour every week with only 1 visitor. The SMU Committee reviews my status every 30 days.

The prison officials tolerate no alternation in their process. There is no room for negotiation or compromise. The system must run smoothly. Dissent or resistance is crushed by the Correctional Response Teams dressed in futuristic battle fatigues. It is a ruthless war of attrition designed to grind a man down to his breaking point.

The previous method employed by the prison system to break prisoners was to break "bones." They relied on brute force and unrestrained violence. This method did not sit well with the American public when it was exposed. It also tarnished America's image in the world as a nation of high standards and values. The method was flawed in that it usually only strengthened prisoners' resistance and made them stronger men. The prison system therefore directed its resources to develop a method of confinement that would destroy a prisoner's mind and his will to resist.

The new assault was directed not against a prisoner's body, but rather his mind and senses. The concept of a complete sensory deprivation and isolation was developed. This concept revolved around the ideas that if a prisoner is deprived of mental, physical, and emotional stimulation, his mind will inevitably turn inward and feed upon itself. With no outlet in an isolated environment, the mind is left to its own devices.

The result is that a prisoner's thoughts run out of control. Concentration becomes difficult and prisoners invent fantasies or images of themselves which they cocoon themselves in.

Some never emerge from this world they create. The mind will seek any relief available. It is not uncommon for men to talk to themselves for hours on end. Insanity and madness rule in a control unit. The units are filled with prisoner's screams, outbursts and pleas for communication. A man's nerves deteriorate right in front

of his eyes. Each prisoner suffers his own personal hell. Everyone is affected in one way or another. Whether the experience affects him for the good or the bad depends upon the man.

It takes an internally strong man to overcome the isolated environment of a control unit, and an even stronger man to retain his sanity and sense of humanity in such a manufactured, hostile atmosphere. Control units are notorious for turning the strong man into a weak man, turning the sane into the insane. It can turn a man upside down and cause him to abandon all the principles and values he holds dear. Conversely, it can reinforce a man's principles and values, and turn the weak man into a strong man. Given the control units' track record in driving men crazy, it is not surprising that the majority of prisoners sent into it are either politically conscious prisoners, prison lawyers, or rebellious young prisoners. It is this class of prisoners that occupies the control units in prison systems across the United States.

A substantial portion of mentally disturbed prisoners are also placed in these units by prison officials so that sane prisoners are subjected to constant verbal abuse and physical assault with feces and urine by this unfortunate class of disturbed prisoners. The presence of mentally disturbed prisoners also prevents unity among the prisoners. Prison officials encourage the actions of these prisoners by rewarding them with token privileges and other superficial enticements. Divide and conquer is the norm and the administration can always be counted on to keep friction going amongst the prisoners.

The prison administration, committees, and guards that operate these control units only view prisoners in terms of our institutional numbers and our files that sit on their desks. That human beings occupy their cells doesn't register. When a man is reduced to a number he is not supposed to have emotions, concerns, hopes or vision. His only function is to process through the system. Prisoners are only to be added, subtracted or multiplied according to the amount of bed space (warehouse space) available in the control unit. Never are they to be rehabilitated, refined or educat-

ed. Everything is reduced to a fine number and is supposed to run as smooth as mathematics. Regiment through force and isolation in a prisoner's life and thoughts will eventually cause him to break and assume his place in the system. But the control unit method is flawed because it fails to take into account that humans are not fine numbers on paper. They are not desensitized objects. Under pressure they will resist, fight back, capitulate or retaliate.

The man that successfully makes it out of a control unit with his mind intact is a stronger person than he was when he entered it. He is a man who developed and evolved under solitude and hostility. If he is politically conscious he emerges stronger in his convictions. So though the state may be destroying countless prisoners across the country in its control units, it is simultaneously breeding a stronger politically conscious class of prisoner committed to a revolutionary change in the social, political, and economic order, especially affecting Black communities in America.

The politically conscious prisoners (labeled the worst of the worst by the state) coming out of these control units recognize that a major contradiction exists in American society. This nation which exalts itself as a defender of human rights and an oasis of freedom and justice violates these very principles within its borders. The operation of units designed to rob a prisoner of his mind and strip him of his so-called human rights violate the very principles America proclaims to represent. International agencies such as Amnesty International and Human Rights have condemned control units as inhuman and cruel and unusual punishment.

In spite of world communication condemning such practices, the U.S. prison system is increasing the construction of these units throughout the country. Construction of these units is encouraged and financially supported by the federal government, the same government that condemns so-called totalitarian nations such as China, Cuba, etc. for human rights abuses against their citizens and prisoners.

Since the American government and its judicial system refuse to abolish control units, and a substantial portion of the American public is indifferent to the treatment of prisoners, major international human rights agencies, civil rights organizations, religious organizations, etc. should petition the U.S. government to abolish these inhumane units. Petitions should also be sent to the U.N. and World Court of Justice seeking an indictment and condemnation of America's control units. Though it is extremely unlikely the U.S. would abolish its use of control units, an

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Buried Alive

The Abu Ghraibs in Our Back Yard

By dave onion

On May 20th the Human Rights Coalition, a group comprised of prisoners' families and supporters held an event both to celebrate the release of their new pamphlet "BURIED ALIVE!" (see Rob X' article Control units: High Tech Brutality elsewhere in this issue) as well as a public kick off of a new campaign to fight the use of solitary confinement in US prisons.

After screening a powerful documentary contrasting life in a Control Unit with that of prisoners in a therapy-centric prison experiment, a panel discussion convened. Former political prisoner Masai Ehehosi spoke first, addressing some of the gradual steps necessary towards prison abolition: "it's not just about opening the prison gates.", we need to create a place to live where we don't need prisons or control. Masai's group Critical Resistance walks the talk of prison abolition. The New York chapter of CR has been actively working on building alternatives to police and prisons in the Brooklyn neighborhood where their office is.

To put prisons themselves into some context historically, Carlton Payne, a psychologist ran down some statistics on the growth of prisons in the US. From the first prison in 1683, it took till 1995 for the prison population to reach a million. Just ten years later that number has doubled and still grows. Today US prisons hold 2.3 million prisoners, a number higher than any other country in the world.

Prison lawyer Angus Love filled in with more history. The Eastern State Penitentiary was built in Philly as a humanitarian experiment by Quakers and the Pennsylvania Prison Society (ironic in that both groups were representing at the forum as opponents of the same Quaker inspired hells). When Eastern State turned out to be a living hell, it yielded to the "NY System" and subsequent, all systems deemed failures only to be replaced by units even more repressive than the previous. The construction of the Supermax (short for Super Maximum security) prison in Marion, IL in 1983 gave birth to a new form of prison, the Control Unit. The Supermax attempts to create a system of total control over every microcosm of life. Marion, from it's inception as a Supermax, housed a number of captured anti-imperialist US Prisoners

of War and Political Prisoners (most of whom had not shown themselves to be any significant threat to the prison order). It was clear that political repression was part of this package. Today new Control Units are springing up across the country, many run by for profit corporations.

In Administrative Segregation (Ad Seg), one of the most severe forms of isolation in US prisons, Payne saw serious psychological impacts on prisoners. Loosing all power over one's environment and self, in desperation prisoners instinctively use violence as a way to regain some semblance of control. With virtually no stimulus, prisoners in isolation find themselves turning apathetic, their cognitive functions clinically decreasing and lacking stimulation become delusional, hallucinating. And with usually no target for the resulting rage, the violence often turns inward resulting in severe depression. "We are creating monsters". Payne stressed. (see Belly of the Beast column next page)

Another panelist, Luqman Abdullah, spent 5 years of his prison time in solitary confinement. His presentation was a needed jolt of rage for the often sleepy radical community in Philadelphia. Luqman put emphasis on urgency of the situation. "We need to organize and get our brothers and sisters out!" Prisoners, including Luqman, in his days at Greene, are sent to the hole regularly for crimes as basic as having being recognized as possessing leadership skills, helping other inmates out with legal issues or attempting to teach other prisoners to read and write. Luqman himself spent time in the hole for crimes as trivial as teaching another prisoner elementary geography.

Teresa, the daughter of Black Liberation Army prisoner Russell Maroon Shoatz, stood on a chair as she gave an update on her father. Clearly recognized as dangerous by the state, Maroon has been in prison for the last twenty years following a shootout with police in Cobbs Creek park. Despite never having had write ups for bad behaviour while in prison, Maroon is still kept segregated from other prisoners. After suffering from severe harassment by a particularly abusive guard (see Maroon's article last issue), a campaign by family and supporters led not to the removal or disciplining of the guard, but to his transfer out of the Control Unit to, of all places, a cell on death row, a place where he apparently

feels better off.

Further pounding home the level of brutality in US prisons, was HRC member Dwayne Howard. Having

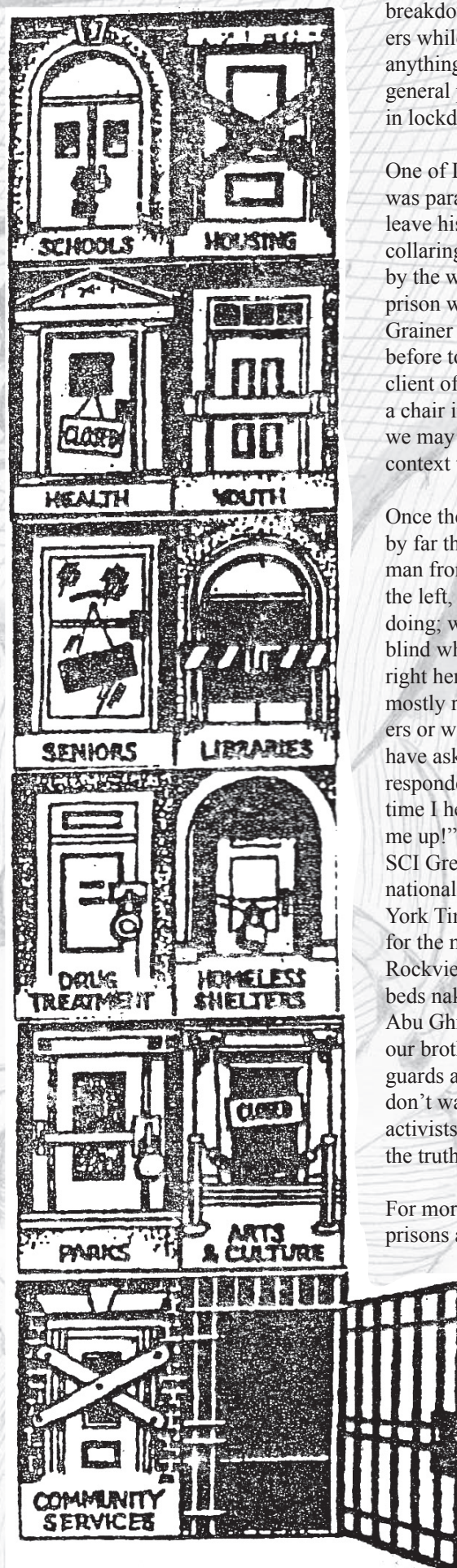
spent time in the hole for petty infractions like making wine, Dwayne testified from his own experience in lockdown to the conditions laid out by Payne: depression, loss of memory, spiritual and emotional breakdown. Threats made to other prisoners while in the hole never amounted to anything once prisoners were back in general population. Everyone knew those in lockdown were losing their minds.

One of Love's clients at SCI Greene, who was paralyzed, couldn't make it to eat or leave his cell. Guards punished him by collaring him with a dog leash. Greene, by the way, is by no coincidence the same prison where Abu Ghraib torturer Charles Grainer worked and apparently practiced before torturing Iraqis overseas. Another client of Love's was strapped naked to a chair in isolation, another visual that we may find more familiar in the Iraqi context than locally.

Once the panel opened up for questions, by far the most to the point was by a man from Sierra Leone who asked what the left, the NGOs and Civil Society are doing; why are people in this country so blind when there are these Abu Ghraib's right here? Questions the entire room, mostly radicals either supporting prisoners or working against prisons no doubt have asked themselves too. Luqman responded angrily and pointedly: "Every time I hear about Abu Ghraib, it burns me up!" The media had covered abuses at SCI Greene back in 96. Amnesty International included it in reports, the New York Times has covered it, but the left for the most part wasn't bothered. "In Rockview prisoners were chained to their beds naked. Why are we talking about Abu Ghraib when guards are abusing our brothers at SCI Fayette. It's the same guards abusing people in America! They don't want the truth, even some of those activists who come in there don't want the truth!"

For more information on the fight against prisons and isolation:

The defenestrator's prison page - defenestrator.org/prison
The Human Rights Coalition - www.hrcoalition.com
Critical Resistance - critical-resistance.org
Prison Activist Resource Center - www.prisonactivist.org



Don't Spy on Me!

Philly Anti-war Activists and the ACLU Launch Campaign!

by Bronwyn Lepore

On June 14th, a number of Philadelphia anti-war groups and collectives, including the defenestrator, launched a campaign to expose and challenge the government's war on dissent. Activists, representatives of the ACLU, including staff attorney Mary Catherine Roper, and Civil Rights attorney Paul Hetzner gathered at the National Constitution Center on 5th and Arch Streets to announce the campaign, afterwards marching to the Philadelphia Federal Building to file a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to demand that government intelligence agencies disclose information they have collected on the filing groups and their peaceful protest activities. According to the campaign's launch statement: "The admitted practice of domestic spying, government secrecy, illegal detention and even torture, threatens us all...we know how the so-called 'war on terror' has been used to create legislation and made targets of people of Arab descent and those considered ethnic, racial or religious 'outsiders'...we shall not live in fear." Groups filing include the Brandywine Peace Community, Delaware County Pledge of Resistance, House of Grace Catholic Workers, the IWW (International Workers of the World), Military Families Speak Out, Kensington Welfare Rights Union, Vietnam Veterans against the War and WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom).

The "revelation" that the FBI was once again spying on peace and justice groups gained some attention on Tuesday, March 14th, when the American Civil Liberties Union "released a series of once secret FBI files that show the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force conducted a secret investigation into the activities of the Thomas Merton Center beginning as early as November 2002, and continuing up until at least last March" (Democracy Now – 15 March 2006). Thomas Merton (1915-1968) was a writer, an activist for peace and social justice and a Trappist monk. The Thomas Merton Center, started in Pittsburgh in 1971 to continue Merton's work has, as a stated goal, the desire "to bring about a more peaceful and just world," and pursues the project of working to "raise the moral questions involved in the issues of war, poverty, racism and oppression." The worst the FBI could come up with is that the Merton Center is a "left-wing organization advocating, among many political causes, pacifism" and that one of the peace activists' monitored flyering "appeared to be of

Middle Eastern descent." In an interview with Democracy Now's Amy Goodman, Tim Vining, former executive director of the center, noted "what's important is that we not allow this to get us to not trust each other or to live in fear and paranoia...we're going back out onto the streets of Pittsburgh and we're going to have another huge protest in the thousands to defend our rights and to speak out against this war." Donna Lieberman of the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCU) told Goodman that the "purpose of the request is to find out what's going on and to publicize that, so that the American people can hold our government accountable for this reign of spying on what's really as American as apple pie: political protest and dissent."

Of course, such spying is nothing new. The U.S. government has a history of stifling dissent. The House Committee on Un-American Activities during the reign of McCarthyism targeted radical political organizations. A series of Supreme Court rulings in 1956/7 challenged the committee, questioning its constitutionality. The FBI responded with COINTELPRO,

which conducted more than 2000 operations, including spying and attacks on the Black Panther Party and numerous other civil rights and anti-war organizations, before its programs were discontinued in April of 1971 after public exposure forced them to. Post 9/11 the Patriot Act increased the government's surveillance powers, granting the ability to conduct secret searches and spying without even having to show reasonable suspicion or seek judicial oversight.

The Philadelphia filing is part of the ACLU's nationwide "Don't Spy on Me" campaign, which also launched a nationwide action in response to revelations about telecoms and NSA spying on American's phone calls. Disappointingly, but not surprisingly, there was no press coverage of the Philly launch, though one would think the preservations of free speech and dissent would be of concern. It's crucial to build public outrage. When I mentioned to attorney Paul Hetzner, who, along with Bob Smith of the Brandywine Peace Community, was pivotal in encouraging the campaign, that the whole thing was making me feel pretty paranoid, he responded: "It should. These are scary times, and we need to act."

For more info call 610-544-1818 or visit www.brandywinepeace.com or www.aclupa.org/constitutionunderseige



Sustainability

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emphasize respect for ALL, practicing inclusive decision making: "It is crucial to give due consideration to the magnitude of a project in order to avoid the risk of presenting 'show-case' solutions which are conceived for the media and only benefit a minority of the inhabitants."

One of the areas in which Curitiba has been most successful is in collectively minimizing waste, according to Lerner "a fundamental objective" and engaging co-responsibility. "Why, for example," he argues, "choose a sophisticated waste separation plant which is laborious to set up and operate when each family can separate the waste in advance and, in the process, develop a healthy sense of joint responsibility towards the environment." Similar thoughts are echoed about city gardens here in Philly, where one gardener noted "if young people are invited to participate in the design and planting of an area, they will grow up learning to respect that area, because they know just how much work went into it." If people are not included in processes of change or are pushed out due to economic incentives, they, of course, feel alienated and peripheralized. Particularly in poverty-stricken areas, where violence, crime, drug use and urban decay combine to make life more full of despair than hope, people's needs must be addressed. Often, neighborhoods and individuals simply take things into their own hands – gardening empty city lots and creating spaces of hope. People like Lilly Yeh, for instance, who uses similar analogies to Lerner to discuss her community efforts - "reconnecting what is broken, healing what is wounded, making the invisible visible" - and who, with neighborhood children and adults and friends, created an urban arts village in North Philly, or spaces like Greensgrow, an organic farm in Kensington, developed on the former site of a galvanized steel plant, or the Pentridge Children's Garden in West Philly.

I want to get back, for a minute, to the fact that Philadelphia and Curitiba have approximately the same size population. "When I cite the example of Curitiba I am often told that it is a special case, where solutions have only been found because the city has only 1.6 million inhabitants," posits Lerner, "I would agree that the city is different – but this is because it has made itself different: all cities (including mega cities) could follow its example." When Lerner spoke at the forum, there were a lot of understandably cynical chuckles about the politics and the sometimes pessimistic culture of Philadelphia – our corrupt city government, nepotism, poverty, racism, police brutality, violence, inequality, a shoddy public school system, the sports teams that always disappoint – that would prevent us from achieving Curitiba's level of sustainability. But the

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Review:

by dave
onion

When *V for Vendetta* popped up on the big screen at mainstream cinemas, there was a buzz amongst anarchist circles. Reading various posts across the internet and in personal conversations, comic book geeks turned anarchists confessed how *Vendetta* had been the first thing to politicize them. Some folks in NYC even set up a website “A for Anarchy” to remind people about the philosophy behind the original comic. Having never paid proper attention to comics before, let alone *Vendetta* a supposedly anarchist graphic novel, I looked forward to seeing the film. People who had seen it already, seemed impressed. One friend of mine took her newfound inspiration from *V* to cover the city with posters against the war the same night.

So needing some pick me up style movie to distract me from all the onslaught of bad news, I went. The film is set in post World War III fascist Britain, an era put into context through TV footage from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars (which the US lost). The subsequent economic collapse of the US economy and its economic empire has given rise to Britain as a new global Superpower. Some of the footage of protests and clashes around the US against the war could have been events I had been present at. In *Vendetta* era Britain, the Christian right wing Norsefire party rules England, brutally repressing dissenters, anti-war activists and gender outlaws, an obvious allusion to our present day aspiring fascist theocracy in the United States.

We first meet *V*, the film’s masked hero, as he rescues co-protagonist Evey from being raped by Fingermen, the regime’s undercover police force. Seeing 5 rapist cops mercilessly get the shit beaten out of them is certainly a great feel good first scene. Definitely a refreshing change of pace from the day in day out diet of cop culture we endure from the Daily News to Hollywood. But the heroic rescue is also a first sign to have me wonder about the anarchist nature of *V*. From then on out *V* and Evey take up a profoundly strange relationship. (and it’s in relationships where we can test for values like anarchy)

That Evey is taken under the wing of *V*, a male paternalistic superhero (who goes on to educationally torture Evey), is just the first sign that something doesn’t quite jive with *V* as an anarchist role model. The power that *V* exercises as a terrorist threat to the State feels much more akin

to that of a leftist Osama Bin Laden - an elusive and dangerous terrorist – really the mainstream stereotype of an elusive

V for Vendetta

masked bomb throwing intellectual. Other anarchist ideas take a back seat in *Vendetta*; values like spreading of directly democratic power in communities, collective ownership and control of the economy, people finding their strength in themselves despite their place in society, genuine solidarity amongst people. And these are values which have always been the traditional basis of anarchist thought and work.

But that said, *Vendetta* does manage to challenge territory in ways that you won’t often see in Hollywood productions, especially in “action” films. Particularly on gender notions: The Norsefire party strictly outlaw gender deviance as they understand it with severity. One character, at great risk, comes out as queer to Evey while he hides her from Fingermen. He then gets snatched up by cops after airing a satire of the ruling dictator on the TV show he hosts. *Vendetta* at various points makes the point to spell out a number of familiar examples of how daily life is impacted by intolerant religious norms. And *V* himself at times even seems ambiguous sexually.

The Wachowski brothers, who wrote the screenplay, no doubt changed the territory somewhat from that of Allan Moore’s original comic. After reading the screenplay, Moore insisted his name be taken off the credits for changing his own scenario of a struggle between anarchist visions and a fascist Britain to what he saw as the Wachowski’s version of liberals vs. conservatives in the United States.

The Wachowski brother’s *Matrix* had some excellent idea content mixed in with the spandex supereffects and flying fists. Particularly Morpheus’ talk with Neo explaining to him his role in postmodern corporate capitalism (ie. the *Matrix*). But as with *Vendetta*, radical and subversive ideas had a lot of their punch taken out by this truly weird proto-Christian messianic strain that persists from Neo to *V*. Both *V* and Neo go about single-handedly annihilating their respective ruling orders. Any social movements we can see in either *V*’s England or in the *Matrix*’ Zion either come too close to religiously worshipping their One or wear *V*’s mask. The broader social picture which is central to the works of thinkers who’ve apparently influenced the film makers (Emma Goldman amongst others is paraphrased in *Vendetta*), play

incidental, almost invisible roles in both stories.

By the end of the film, thousands of masked *V*s emerge from London into the streets, fearlessly past police standing in their way, gazing at the spectacle of fire and explosions – sig-

nifying a new dawn of sorts. This scene is just too weird and has me simultaneously thinking of a few different scenarios:

One. *V* as a masked voice of many; someone like the Zapatista Subcommandante Marcos who like *V* likes to talk in prose and refers to the ski masks the Zapatistas wear as equalizers and levelers of power, neutralizers of cults of personality (ironic as that may sound coming from Marcos). Marcos and the Zapatistas have often stressed the multiplicity in struggle and use their own status as media spectacle to challenge the notion of a proletariat that can be stereotyped. Self identified Zapatistas ranging from Queer activists to farmers fighting for their land to workers struggling for better conditions to marginalized indigenous women say “Todos Somos Marcos” (We are all Marcos) to stress their support for the Zaps who reciprocally support them as part of a recognized larger struggle. The final scene in which the crowd assembled under the explosions of government buildings drop their masks to reveal a multitude of faces of different ages, ethnicities and genders could suggest *V* as a social metaphor.

“We use black ski-masks to show our faces. Only in this way can we be seen and heard.”

Two. But then I simultaneously think of the effect of idolized leftist saints. Leaders like Tito or currently Venezuela’s Chavez who despite their authoritarianism act as empowerers of ideas. Ideas that ultimately resulted in some very effective and powerful

grassroots movements. I feel elements of a messiah in this one too. One can’t dismiss the effects of such charismatic leadership in helping both individuals and movements of people gain the necessary confidence to overthrow oppressive situations. But we also know that when liberatory ideas and relationships are too strongly attached to idols or other symbols, we often see them die along with their messiah.

Regardless of who *V* is or was intended to be, it’s always important to remember that things like repressive societies or societal oblivion are primarily social relationships. It’s about how we relate to each other; how resources are controlled, how we understand, exercise and respond to power. The title of an old anarchist pamphlet against terrorism says it concisely: You Can’t Blow up a Social Relationship. Not that explosions have no role in creating a free society, but they should be seen as what they are. They can be symbolic statements or momentarily necessary tactics, but of course explosions won’t change how we interact, nor how coercive power exists as threads in our social fabric. In the end, despite the pretty fireworks and the annihilation of cops, *V* falls short for me because it’s a film about a revolution, but falls back on too many things that seem so counter to what our project of deconstructing power and building different realities is about.

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Kissing Babies and Criminalizing Dissent...

a day in the life of governor Ed Rendell

by eian weissman

Margaret Mead once said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

But, sometimes you can’t help but feel really, really small. I’ll admit I felt a little daunted the day we protested the passage of House Bill 213 --the so-called “eco-terrorism” bill--in front of the offices of Governor Rendell. House Bill 213 is a sentencing enhancement bill which increases the penalties for preexisting crimes if they were committed with the intention to intimidate, coerce, prevent, or obstruct an individual lawfully engaging in activities involving or using animals, plants, or natural resources.

At this point the bill had already passed the house of representatives and the senate and was heading to the Governors desk to await his signature and here I was on the median at the center of Market street handing out fliers to cars stopped at the stoplights, attempting to rattle off a highly abbreviated summary of the bill in under 10 seconds for each driver whose attention I could catch. In the battle for public attention, our little cluster of protesters with a few small banners, a cheap megaphone, and some cardboard signs between the lot of us seemed like a poor match for the neon storefronts and the half-naked ladies leering at us from bus-stop billboards.

Then, a pair of bull-necked ex-quarterbacks with wireless earpieces stepped out of the Governors office and crossed the street towards us. “Who’s the leader of this?” queried the first guard. “Uhhh... we don’t really have one” I replied, assuming they were plainclothes police. “Well then,

who is your spokesperson?” asked the second. “Uhhh...we don’t really have one” replied Nathan, my nearest cohort. “Well, the Governor would like to speak with you” stated the first guard. Nathan and I looked at each other.

Next thing we knew, Nathan and I were standing in an air-conditioned elevator with our new, broad-shouldered friends. Its always moments like this when you realize that you smell like a rotting sack full of onions sitting in a tin shack in the middle of the desert.

It turns out that Rendell had not even read the bill, despite the fact that he was to sign it within the next ten days, which he stated openly at the outset of our meeting. We tried to summarize its content as best we could and state our grievances. He stated that, “at first blush” he didn’t like the bill (I later learned that he had been a lawyer before he became governor) as it merely increased the penalties for criminal acts which were, in many cases, already felonious and carried weighty prison terms, and was therefore patently unnecessary. I felt that we handled ourselves fairly well, given the circumstances. He asked us to fax him a legal brief on the bill with our criticisms within the next few days, as he would need, and I quote, “some good reasons for vetoing this bill.”

I guess, as they say, politics really is show business for ugly people. Either Rendell put on a really good act, or I am just a sucker for a smiling politician.

I remember a scene from Sinclair Lewis’s novel, “It Can’t Happen Here”, in which a fascist in sheep’s clothing named Buzz Windrip rides a wave of public hysteria into the

white house in the 1930’s Depressions era USA. The protagonist, Doremus Jessup, a rather A-political everyman, travels to New York City to watch Windrip speak at a campaign rally during the presidential race. At first, he wonders to himself how this unspectacular man can so captivate the nation. Then Windrip speaks and Jessup is caught up in his thrall. It is only as he is walking home that he realizes that, having broken the spell of Windrip’s personality, he could not recall a word of the man’s speech.

I feel that this scene does well to describe the sensation of talking with Rendell. It’s moments like this that you realize that the art of politics is akin to such esoterica as palm reading and fortune telling in that the medium must channel the Bullshit without spilling any of it on themself.

I think the spell finally wore off completely when I first read Rendell’s signing letter that he released upon signing HB 213 into law. It was as though I had finally kicked a nasty cold just in time to smell the BS in full bloom.

After signing off on a Law which metes out terrorism charges to peaceful protesters guilty of summary offenses (which are basically on par with receiving a parking ticket) Rendell has the unmitigated gall to write the following:

“If this legislation imposed additional penalties on persons who were only engaged in peaceful protest that did not involve property damage, I would have vetoed the bill. But to be subject to the additional penalties imposed under House Bill 213, protesters must do more – they must act against property with the specific intent to intimidate. That type of conduct cannot be countenanced in any free society.”

But who am I to question the sanctity of private property? Silly me thinking that we could potentially infringe on the profit margins of multinational resource extraction companies that have gradually (and not so gradually) made plantations out of public lands, ranched the west to dust (what is industrial agriculture but the mining of nutrients from our soil after all) dammed our rivers and generally raped this nation from end to end. What is such a nebulous notion as biological diversity or carrying capacity compared to such worldly concerns as the bottom line of logging industry.

While researching the legal brief for Rendell with a lawyer friend, I came across a mention on the ACLU website of Supreme Court Justice Scalia’s position on HB 213. He was opposed to the bill for the same reasons that he is opposed to hate crime legislation because both hate-crime laws and eco-terror laws

target specific political viewpoints. It seems morally unsound to compare a law criminalizing environmental activism with a law criminalizing hateful acts targeting specific ethnic or cultural groups. But that is the letter of the law I suppose.

In Sinclair Lewis’s novel, a conclusion seems to be that being caught, like poor Doremus, in the crossfire between the extreme poles of ideology can turn any man into a fascist or a terrorist. While it sounds a bit much like the perennial mothers’ platitude, “moderation in all things,” his message seems to speak to the inverse of Margaret Mead’s famous quip.

“Never doubt that a small group of clever, unscrupulous individuals can destroy the planet. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Sustainability

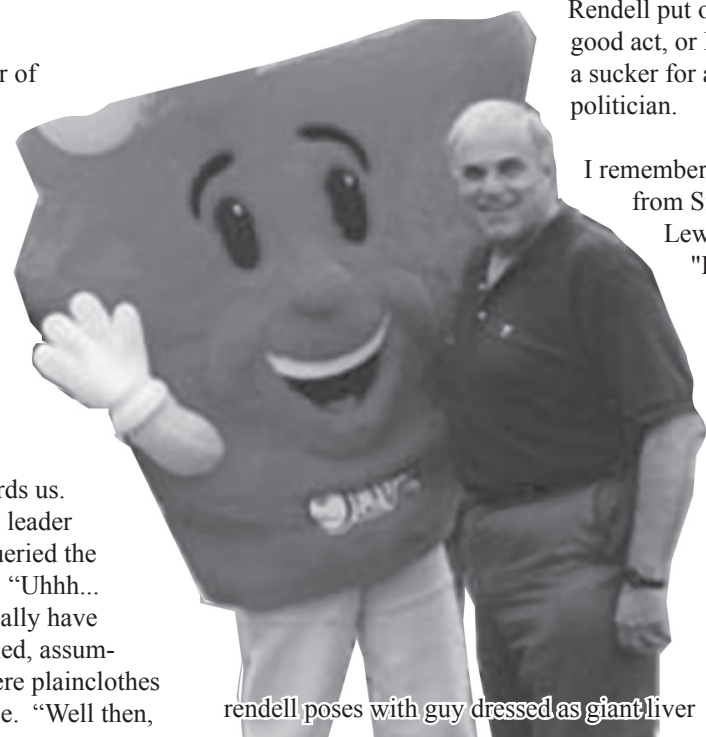
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consequences of not striving – a sort of dystopian future of air unfit to breathe, piled up waste and dirty water – should jolt us into envisioning alternative possibilities and taking them seriously.

“The most important thing we are faced with today is to raise consciousness,” remarked Murray Bookchin in one of his last interviews (see <http://www.social-ecology.org/harbinger/vol2no1/bookchin.html>), “America can be a good example. Americans by disposition and cultural heritage are activists. They don’t think very much in advance, they act, and then they look for the reason why they acted. They don’t think much of the past or the future...it’s our job to bring out these faults. Our people have to know what happened in history, what philosophy is, so they can educate. They have to have a point of view. They can’t just be against something; they have to offer an alternative.” An alternative practice that Curitiba has cultivated and that Bookchin also emphasized is decentralization of government – “...decisions must always come from below, that is, from assemblies of the people”; when people have more power there is more interdependence, less alienation, and thus more health.

Bookchin, considered by many as the “father” of the Social Ecology* movement (he founded the internationally respected Institute for Social Ecology in Plainfield, Vermont and wrote such seminal works as “Ecology and Revolutionary Thought” ’64 and The Ecology of Freedom, ’82/’91) passed away this July, at the age of 85, after having spent much of his life considering the possibilities for more ecological, ethical and egalitarian ways of living. He “developed a critique of hierarchy and related the struggle against hierarchy to the struggle for the integrity of the natural world” that is worthwhile taking seriously. In fact, all of the writers, planners, visionaries, urban gardeners we have discussed thus far, empha-

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rendell poses with guy dressed as giant maver

From Below and to the Left...

The Zapatistas Build a Different Way of Doing Politics

Joined by a team of Mexican, gringo, Brazilian, and French journalists, RJ Maccani reported on the Zapatista's new national initiative in Mexico from the Southwestern state of Oaxaca in the first months of 2006. Here he gives an insiders view into the beginnings of a national movement building popular power beyond the state.

(from Left Turn issue #20)

The Zapatista rebels of Mexico's Southeastern state of Chiapas are taking their boldest step since they rose up in arms twelve years ago. Continuing a twenty-two year journey of growth and transformation, they are spreading out beyond their autonomous communities to join with and build a Mexican and global movement for democracy, freedom, and justice.

Following an internal consultation with the over 200,000 members of the Zapatista communities in June of 2005, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) released their Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle. The declaration is essential reading as it tells their story in their own words and will be the guiding document for their future work. Also an invitation to publicly join the EZLN in building a movement against capitalism "from below and to the left," it can be found online in at least eight languages.

Although the Zapatistas have been the most popular reference point for the radical Left in the past decade, and in spite of their being hundreds of books and hundreds of thousands of articles and essays written and translated into dozens of languages by and about them, they have often been misunderstood. One reason for this is that they have been practicing a way of doing politics quite distinct from the one to which the westernized world is accustomed. Since their emergence in the public eye on New Years Day of 1994, the Zapatistas have unfailingly put into practice the principle that leadership is a position of service, they have prioritized listening, accountability, and consensus-building, and they have put ethics before pragmatism, moving "at the pace of the

slowest." And it is because of this that the Zapatistas enjoy a nearly unrivaled level of moral authority in Mexico and the world.

In launching the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle, they are putting this moral authority, as well as the lives of their leadership, at risk. The Sixth Declaration is distinct from the five that precede it because this time the Zapatistas don't just intend to inspire or convene those fighting for humanity and against capitalism, but to defy arrest warrants and death threats by leaving their autonomous territories and literally joining with "the humble and simple people who struggle" in Mexico and throughout the world. The moral authority of the EZLN will soon be held not just in their own hands, but also in the hands of all those who build new initiatives with them.

That being said, EZLN remaining accountable their Mayan indigenous support base and the majority of the army will remain in Chiapas and continue to defend the over 1,100 zapatista communities which are grouped into 29 autonomous municipalities and five regions known as "caracoles." With massive support and solidarity from Mexican and international civil society, these Zapatista communities are innovating with political and judicial structures and educational, health, communication and economic development programs that put the Mexican government to shame. They have accomplished all of this while being surrounded by 50 to 60 thousand troops—roughly one third to one fourth of the Mexican military.

Two new groups have recently formed

out of the EZLN: the Sixth Commission and the Intergalactic Commission. The Sixth Commission is composed of fifteen indigenous comandantes of the EZLN and its iconic mestizo spokesman, Subcomandante Marcos, and is responsible for carrying out the national objectives of the Sixth Declaration. These objectives are to join with Mexican civil society to create or recreate another way of doing politics "from below and to the left," to build an anticapitalist national plan of struggle, and to form a new Mexican constitution.

The Intergalactic Commission is currently headed by Lieutenant Colonel Moisés and is concerned with building closer links with movements around the world, including sending material aid to groups in resistance and participating in the creation of more convergences such as the legendary "Encounter for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism" convened by the Zapatistas in 1996 which laid the groundwork for what would become known as the Global Justice Movement.

In August of 2005, less than two months after releasing the Sixth Declaration, the Sixth Commission began convening meetings to build a national political force beyond the electoral parties. Over consecutive weekends, Mexican civil society came to the Zapatista territories of Chiapas in sectors:

first—political organizations of the left, second—indigenous peoples organizations, third—social organizations, fourth—collectives, non-governmental and artistic organizations, and fifth—families, communities and individuals with no organizational affiliation. A sixth meeting was held for all those who could not attend the previous meetings. Each meeting was a listening party in which everyone who came and publicly adhered to the Sixth Declaration was encouraged to speak for as long as they liked about their lives, struggles, and wishes for the new movement that they were building together. For six weekends in a row, the Sixth Commission listened and took notes while their new compañeros introduced themselves. Subcomandante Marcos played mediator and his opening and closing remarks generally framed each weekend.

At the conclusion of these six meetings, in the middle of September, all the adherents

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Atenco Rebels Hit Hard by Police Siege

San Salvador Atenco, Mexico



On May 3rd, state police blocked 60 flower vendors from setting up their stands at the Texcoco local market in the State of Mexico, about 20 miles east of Mexico City. The police beat and arrested those who resisted. After calling on neighboring San Salvador Atenco for help, the Atenco residents blocked the highway to Texcoco. Atenco is famous across Mexico for having resisted in 2002 the forced displacement from their community to make way for a new Mexico City Airport. Villagers, mostly small farmers, formed the People's Front in Defense of Land (Frente del Pueblo en Defensa de La Tierra) and,

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Police repression against teachers in Oaxaca

On June 14, 2006, Mexican police forced out as many as 50,000 striking teachers camped in the heart of Oaxaca in the latest exercise of brutal police power ahead of July elections.

The police also beat other people and destroyed the radio equipment of Radio Plantón, a wireless station that was continuously transmitting the situation of the teachers' movement.

From those forced out in Oaxaca: "This act is yet another piece of evidence of the repression that governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz has orchestrated against those who disagree with policies that violate human rights and those who stand up to denounce social injustice and the state of siege lived in today. There are disappeared teachers, people hurt and intoxicated with tear gases, apprehensions, and domiciliary persecutions. Also mentioned are the death of two children and at least three teachers. After five hours of skirmish, the teachers began to re-occupy the central square while 'the forces of the order' regroup in other places of the city to reinstate the aggression."

From SOA Watch soawatch.org

La Otra Campana continued from last page

from the previous meetings were invited back to Chiapas for a plenary in which they launched what is being called “The Other Campaign”. They discussed in depth what it means to practice another way of doing politics and build a national plan of struggle. This discussion is being structured around six points or themes: 1. Characteristics, 2. Who is invited?, 3. Structure, 4. Treatment of differences, 5. Other forces, and 6. Work.

One aspect of this other way of doing politics is that these six points are intended to be discussed by all adherents not so that some people’s positions will eventually dominate others, or that there will be winners and losers, but so that adherents will begin a process of communication that allows them to create a movement together, understanding each others’ perspectives while respecting the autonomy of each organization and individual. It is understood by most that it will be the shared work more so than these discussions that will ultimately reveal the face and nature of the Other Campaign.

“The Other Campaign” is a clever title for this new initiative when put into the context of the June 2006 Mexican presidential elections and the massive electoral campaigns being launched by the three dominant political parties: the Institutional Revolutionary Party (the “PRI” whose over 70 years of one party rule was finally broken in the 2000 elections), the National Action Party (the “PAN” whose candidate, Vicente Fox, won the presidency in 2000 as “the candidate of change” and then followed in the footsteps of the PRI) and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (the “PRD”, founded in 1989 as a party of the left, whose candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador—known simply as “AMLO”—is expected to win the presidency this year).

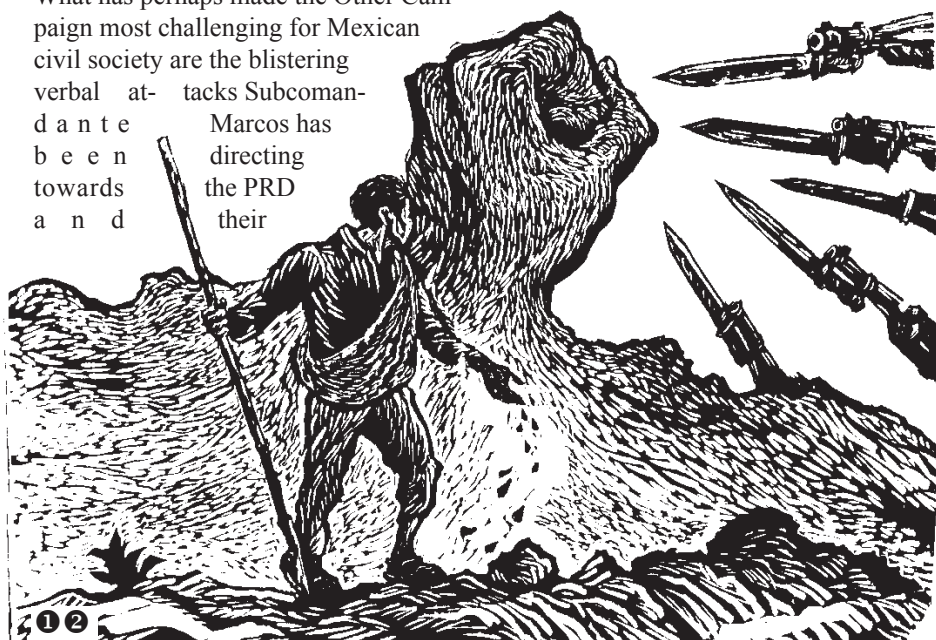
What has perhaps made the Other Campaign most challenging for Mexican civil society are the blistering verbal attacks Subcomandante Marcos has been directing towards the PRD and their

candidate, AMLO. What is most concerning for AMLO and the PRD is that a great deal of their base listens to and highly respects the words of the EZLN. While some on the Mexican and international left have scoffed at the Zapatistas for publicly attacking a left candidate poised to win the presidency, it should be understood that the PRD and AMLO have justly earned the Zapatistas’ suspicion and disdain.

After working beside each other in prior years, the PRD stabbed the Zapatistas in the back in 2001 by joining the PAN and PRI in ratifying a mutilated version of the Law for Indigenous Rights and Culture. The constitutional amendment they passed, which was later upheld by the Mexican judiciary, closed the door on the hopes of Mexico’s indigenous for achieving justice through the existing political structure. AMLO has continued to surround himself with former members of the PRI and even signaled that he does not have substantive objections to the Pact of Chapultepec, which was created by Carlos Slim (the richest man in Mexico and, according to Forbes, the fourth richest man in the world) to secure the commitment of all three leading candidates to continue pursuing neoliberal economic policy. Meanwhile, members of the Zapatista Front have been spending time in Brazil documenting the devastating effects that popular “left” president Lula’s tenure has had on that country’s social movements and people.

The Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle and the Other Campaign partially arrive as the culmination of various experiences in which the political class of Mexico has attacked, lied to, and betrayed the Zapatistas. The EZLN have broken all dialogue and relationships with the political class and are successfully

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Lies, Double Standards, and Culpable Fallacies

Raja Halwani, Electronic Lebanon, 23 July 2006

“Lebanon is being sold for the price of a word: Terrorism. What a bad joke!” by Beirut artist and blogger Mazen Kerbaj. View more of his work.

The following is a list - by no means exhaustive - of lies, double standards, and culpable fallacies perpetrated by US and Israeli officials.

Lie: On Thursday, July 20, the Israeli ambassador to the UN, Dan Gillerman, claimed that Israel’s current attack on Lebanon is a war for its very existence. Indeed, every time Israel has entered into a war with its Arab neighbors, be it the 1956 war, the 1967 war, the 1973 war, the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, or its perpetual war with the Palestinians, Israeli officials have claimed that Israel is fighting for its survival, defending its very existence from Arabs who want to annihilate it.

This is a blatant lie. First, Israel has the mightiest military in the region, possessing state-of-the-art weapons, including nuclear ones (Israel’s “open secret”). How the area’s strongest country faces existential threats by its far weaker neighbors has yet to be explained. The Palestinians, always portrayed by Israel as threatening its existence, are basically an unarmed people, relying on rocks, firearms, and crudely made rockets to fight Israel’s occupation. Second, any careful reading of history shows that it was Israel that has proved over and over again to be resistant to Arab overtures of peace, pursuing a policy of territorial expansion at the expense of a lasting and just settlement to its conflict with the Palestinians. Virtually every single Israeli prime minister, from David Ben Gurion, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Shamir, Menachem Begin, Ariel Sharon, to Ehud Olmert, has rejected a just settlement. Even the much vaunted peaceniks Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak had their own view of what a Palestinian state should be: a shrunken one, with no full sovereignty, a view that no Palestinian leader could accept without rejection from his people.

Double Standard: On Friday, July 21, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice claimed during a press conference that Hizbullah’s penetration of Israeli territory and its abduction of two Israeli soldiers on July 12 violated numerous international laws. That may be so, but her statement is a blatantly selective application of international law. Rice did not, for example, mention the numerous international laws that Israel has violated and continues to violate. Here are a few examples: UN General Assembly resolution 194, which calls on Israel to repatriate the Palestinian refugees; UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which demand of Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupied in the 1967 war; and the various UN resolutions calling on Israel to withdraw from Lebanon after its 1982 invasion (which Israel eventually heeded, but fully only in 2000, thus defeating the very point of issuing such resolutions).

Culpable Fallacy: On Thursday, July 19, US ambassador to the UN, John Bolton, repeated the claim during a press conference that it was Hizbullah that started and caused the current conflict. First, assuming for a moment that we agree that Hizbullah’s abduction of the two Israeli soldiers is the appropriate starting point, it does not follow that just because Hizbullah “started” and “caused” this conflict Israel’s responsibility somehow disappears and Israel

can take a moral holiday. For surely Israel can choose to end the conflict or can choose to take it in a non-military direction. Or are Israeli officials mere robots, such that by pressing the right buttons Hizbullah can unleash a wholesale attack by Israel on Lebanon? Second, why begin with Hizbullah’s abduction of the two Israeli soldiers? Why not begin with Israel’s continual violations of Lebanon’s sovereignty? Why not Israel’s continued occupation of Lebanon till 2000 that helped to give Hizbullah its continued reason for existing and operating? Why not its 1982 invasion that helped sow the seeds for Hizbullah’s very existence? Why not even begin with Israel’s occupation in 1967 of more Palestinian lands? Indeed, why not begin in 1948, with Israel’s creation and the simultaneous creation of the Palestinian refugee problem and future turmoil in the region?

Lie: Israeli officials, supported by the US mainstream media, continually assert that Israel targets only Hizbullah positions, and that any civilian casualties are due to either mistakes or to Hizbullah’s hiding amidst civilian populations. But anyone who takes a good look at the havoc that Israel has wreaked on Lebanon since its attack 10 days ago cannot but dispute such a claim. Are the factories, the power-grids, the trucks, the homes, and other civilian infrastructures Hizbullah positions? This is clearly not so. Indeed, Israel has admitted that it has targeted these places in order to cripple Hizbullah. But with this admission, the game is up. What about when Israel hits a civilian building with the excuse that Hizbullah uses it? Why does this count as targeting civilians? Well, someone can say that the Israeli pilot’s intention is not to kill civilians, but Hizbullah fighters, and so he is not, after all, targeting civilians. But this won’t do. When I fell a tree to build a house, the distinction here is not between intending to build a house and not intending to fell the tree. I intend to do both. The distinction here is rather between ultimate or final intentions and mediate ones: the Israeli pilot ultimately intends the death of Hizbullah fighters, but mediately intends the death of civilians. There is no way around it. In any case, the record speaks for itself: can the overwhelming deaths over the past decades of Palestinian civilians, and, over the past 10 days, in Lebanon (setting aside those during Israel’s many incursions into this country) all be due to accidents and mistakes? Israel certainly needs to explain these numbers, and by “explain” I don’t simply mean repeating over and over the mantra that Israel does not target civilians.

But doesn’t Hizbullah hide among civilians? I don’t know about the word “hide” - after all, Hizbullah fighters have not exactly proven themselves cowardly - but Hizbullah is not a state army, it is a militia, a military organization (that some describe as a resistance movement and others as a terrorist organization). Historically, such groups have operated among civilian populations, populations that typically allow them to do so because they come from and are supported by these populations. If they are to successfully carry out their goals, they have to; otherwise, they would be continuously defeated. This is why, while Israel surely prefers that Hizbullah operate from tall buildings with neon signs that say, “THIS IS HIZBULLAH; COME BOMB US,” Hizbullah is not about to do so. And unless we totally rule out the moral permissibility of such groups - and we shouldn’t, since we

then rob people of their right to resist oppression - then we cannot condemn in a blanket way the fact that they tend to operate from among civilians.

Double Standard: Both US and Israeli officials claim that Hizbullah is a terrorist organization. I do not wish to argue that it is not one (it has targeted civilians), though Hizbullah itself vehemently denies the claim and most Arabs in the region do not see it as one. I do want to take issue with the double standard: if Israel targets civilians, then Israel is a terrorist state. And not only has Israel targeted civilians in its day to day military operations in Lebanon and in the occupied Palestinian territories, it has also maintained a military occupation of the Palestinians since 1967 that has wreaked havoc and fear on their lives - in a word, terrorized them. Moreover, nothing hinges on the fact that Hizbullah is an organization while Israel is a state; this is utterly irrelevant: if the essence of terrorism is the targeting of civilians for political purposes, then one can be an organization, a state, and even Santa Claus, can be terrorist.

Culpable Fallacy: We have been told repeatedly in recent days by Israeli officials that Israel is not interested in occupying Lebanon but only in getting rid of Hizbullah or at least weakening it. I will not dispute the first claim: given Israel's experience in Lebanon from 1982 to 2000, it makes sense that it does not wish to occupy the country (although Israel's intentions and plans are not clear, and, in any case, events in the region have a way of wresting things from the hands of leaders and their desires). But the second claim contains a fallacy. Let us suppose that Israel succeeds to the fullest extent: it goes into Lebanon, dismantles all Hizbullah's infrastructure, and arrests or kills every single one of their fighters. Then what? Has it gotten rid of Hizbullah? For a while, yes it has. But then more fighters will crop up, learning from their predecessors' mistakes and more determined to inflict even more damaging blows on Israel, with far more serious repercussions for its citizens. And then we're back to square one, with Israel attacking again and claiming that it wants to defeat Hizbullah II. My dear Israeli brethren: if you want to defeat Hizbullah, then get rid of its popular support and the reason for its being. But to do that, you'll have to start treating the Palestinians, the Lebanese, and other Arabs with a lot more respect, far less racism, and with bushels of moral decency and justice.

A Few Words on Being Patronizing: In the last couple of days, a few Israeli officials have started saying that they want to get rid of Hizbullah not just for Israel's sake, but also for the sake of the Lebanese, so that Lebanon can become a truly sovereign nation. God help us. We have a saying back from where I come from (Lebanon): "He killed us with his kindness." This is exactly what Israel is doing. In its zeal to help Lebanon become a sovereign nation, it has so far managed to kill about 300 Lebanese, injure over 500, and displace over 500,000. I shudder at the thought of more help from Israel. But it seems that Israel wants to add to its glittering list of adjectives - being arrogant, racist, aggressive, domineering, unjust - the word "patronizing."

Nothing I have said here is original. But in a world whose leaders are almost completely deaf, these claims bear repeating, even shouting.

Vietnamese Community Organizing in Post Katrina New Orleans

Interview with Au Hyun

Shortly after Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana, Philadelphia trouble maker Au Hyun made her way to the Gulf Coast to do what she could. Before long, Au put her Vietnamese to good use translating for the local Vietnamese community who often found themselves cut out of the loop of aid and information because of language troubles. Before long Au went from advocating to organizing. After some numerous inspiring chats with Au when she would blow through town (which always involved "get your ass down here!"), I was always impressed by what she'd gotten herself into. So it only seemed fitting to have her share some of the knowledge...

My name is Au Hyun. I'm an organizer with the Mary Queen of Vietnam Church in New Orleans. It's Vietnamese Catholic Church with about 7000 Congregants registered pre-Katrina. Post Katrina they have about 2000 that are permanently back in their homes and another 2000 or so that attend mass every Sunday that come from other areas that they're staying at now while their homes are being rebuilt. It's also the largest Vietnamese community in a concentrated area outside of Vietnam. And the history of the community is the entire community came from 2 villages in North Vietnam in 1954 and then fleeing to South Vietnam in 1954 and then 1975 to New Orleans East and have remained there ever since. And so in a way it's a very unique community because it's a community that's been able to retain the Vietnamese culture and history and heritage as well as some of the struggles

The reason why the entire community has not returned back to New Orleans right now is because of the schools; the city does not have any plans to open back up any of the public schools in New Orleans East. Out of 94000 people in New Orleans East, 2500 have returned and about 1800 -2000 of those are Vietnamese. And the City does not have any plans to open a school, so the people are not returning until the schools are reopened.

Do you want to talk about how the Vietnamese community is unique in how they were dealing with being neglected post-Katrina?

I don't think they were necessarily neglected. I think all communities of color were neglected but I think in a lot of ways the government has pitted the Vietnamese community against some of the other communities, saying hey, you folks are going to rebuild so we're going to support you. So we actually are not having a lot of problems getting FEMA support right now.

What we did is we fought FEMA and chased

down Nagin and got him to sign a piece of paper to allow us to have 200 trailers. So these trailers are going to be on Arch Diocese land across the street from us. And that's where we're going to be building our cultural center and our senior living facilities.

Do you want to talk about what kind of struggles are going on right now in New Orleans?

Well right now because the city was declared as a state of Emergency, mayor Ray Nagin had enacted an order to place a landfill in the community 2 miles from the church, 8 miles from the closest residential area separated by a canal. On the left side of that canal is the largest urban wildlife refuge in the country. And this waterway actually leads right into where our senior garden is going to be and the most of the Vietnamese homes are along this canal. So it's going to contaminate the entire area. Not only that, but it's half a mile from where the levees are at. And this is all post Katrina construction debris, so it's completely contaminated and they need a place to dump it, so they're going to dump it in the Vietnamese community. It's going to affect all of New Orleans East.

And this is the third time they've actually tried to place a landfill in the same location and they were thrown out by the Vietnamese community twice before in the last fifteen years this is the third time they're trying to do this. But this time Mayor Nagin isn't backing down. We're hitting them from the national level, the state level, direct action, everything we can do now to stop this landfill because we don't want this in this community.

A third of the community in what is called Versailles, a third of Versailles is African American, all of New Orleans East is African American; and they have plans to put three other landfills around there. So they don't want people to come back home and people are trying to come back. They don't care about people in New Orleans East. So what the Vietnamese community has decided to do is we've created a voting block. So we're forcing them to address some of the issues that are affecting our community.

Also if the schools aren't going to be open, then families aren't going to come back yet. So that says a lot in a city where two thirds of the city is inoperable. Where the homes are still sitting there filled with mold. The insurance companies aren't paying either and people are just using money from their own pockets.

You mentioned something about barricading in a church. Do you want to talk about that?

Saint Augustine is a church on the edge of the French Quarter. It's the first African American church in the country that allowed slaves to

worship as free men. So there's a lot of historical significance to this church. The Archdiocese decided that because the church wasn't making enough money in terms of people donating that they're going to close this church down. Even though the community members wanted their church. They loved their priest, and in a time post Katrina, a lot of people down in New Orleans are very faith dependent. So a group of activists decided to, with community support of course, took over and barricaded themselves inside the church until the Archdiocese would talk to them. And the community members couldn't be there 24/7, so they asked a group of activists I know very well to basically support them, so they did.

The Arch Diocese sent a priest from another church from St Peter Claver down the street over. Here's this historical black church with a black priest and they sent in this white man in a Kente cloth to preach and sent armed security guards with guns in this church. The community members were really upset so they protesting during mass. The Archdiocese made it seem like the protesters were violent, but in reality it was the priest from down the street who came into a black church with ten armed guards. We actually have the video tape of that mass if you want to see it. We taped it. So we barricaded ourselves in there and we negotiated and I think the reason why the police didn't raid the place was because it was around elections. So they were trying to keep cool till after the elections, so we were trying to negotiate with the Archdiocese and we won. We got everything including the priest back. We threatened to release some personal information about Arch Bishop Hughes. Big, big child molester. The guy from Boston they sent down after the cover up in Boston to New Orleans, so we have all this information. So we forced them to negotiate with us.

Is there much going on in terms of different groups of people working together in New Orleans.

There's definitely been a lot of coalition building. At our church we've been working with the Hispanic Apostolate in terms of workers' rights. Our priest spoke at the workers' rights rally down in New Orleans. We've been doing a lot of coalition building with some of the interfaith groups around New Orleans. The push for a progressive agenda as well as well as organizing with the different communities of color down there that have been affected by this. So we work in solidarity with a lot of different coalitions right now.

Has HR 4437 and all that organizing around the anti-immigrant bill affected the Vietnamese community?

Not in New Orleans East, because everybody's been living there for 30 years, but I would

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imagine in Biloxi there is. I haven't been down there lately because I've been so busy but I would say about nine percent of them are undocumented and most of them are part of the shrimping industry. And now that the shrimping industry has been wiped out down there, they're working as day laborers or hotel workers in Biloxi at the Casinos, so there's definitely a push to organize Vietnamese workers down in Biloxi right now, and in Plaquemines Parish. Plaquemines Parish is a fishing community in the Bayou next to New Orleans. They were basically wiped out by thirty-foot storm surges.

Usually if you go through New Orleans most of the homes you see will have X written with the date of when the federal government got there, which military unit got there, how many bodies were found. You go to Plaquemines Parish. No-one got there till the end of November. I don't think it will ever be rebuilt. Some people I know are trying to organize soup kitchens down there and the shrimpers. It's very expensive to fix the boats. We're coming up with different projects in terms of how to fix the boats. Especially for the Vietnamese community. The majority of whom live in Empire, which is right in Plaquemines Parish, none of them belong to any of the faith based groups so they actually lack a lot of the support compared to some of the other groups. And there's some issues with language access and also the folk who live in Plaquemines Parish who are part of the Vietnamese community, working class who haven't been educated, most can't read or write. Most are working as day laborers now.... They're sitting there waiting, waiting, waiting for FEMA or someone to respond to them.

What made you chose to work with faith based groups like churches?

I didn't actually. They chose me. I've never prayed more in my life. I initially came down to the Gulf region to because I wanted to work with the Vietnamese community, because I am Vietnamese, and I just kind of stumbled onto this church and have really grown attached to the community members there and learned a lot from them.

Anything you want to put out there?

I think there definitely needs to be grassroots coalition building. People need to start working together especially in New Orleans and really work with some of the communities of color and really support some of the grassroots organizations that are made of people of color from those communities... we've been definitely pushing for a lot of coalition building among the different communities of color.

I like People's Hurricane Fund.... now. They're working pretty closely with the lower Ninth Ward residents, with some of the folks who weren't able to come home. They're actually trying to get their input for the rebuilding. And they're doing it through Satellite conferencing.... There's a lot of good people who are urging people to be responsible and conscious of the communities that they're trying to serve. I've definitely seen a lot of that too, where there's a

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Notes on The Anti-CPE Uprisings in France

“We Don't Want Full Employment, We Want Full Lives!”

“Not just a piece of cake, but the bakery!” the French Jobless Revolt of 1998

From a group of French Strikers (Saint-Nazaire, 3 April 2006)

To People in Other Countries: “Your newspapers and televisions describe us as spoiled brats who are foolishly rejecting the ‘necessary changes’ decreed by the kings of the so-called ‘free-enterprise’ economy...in reality we are fighting against a law aimed at totally destroying the rights of working people, rights won long ago through the struggles...in so doing, we are fighting not only for ourselves and our children, but for the well-being and dignity of all humanity...don't believe the caricatural image of us presented in the media. Challenge it... We refuse to stand by while this boat is capsized by the present rulers of the world, whose never-ending accumulation of money reduces more and more people to poverty and misery. We are mutineers against those destructive captains, trying to turn the boat toward a better world. Support us. Join us.”

And, c'est vrai (it's true), when I mentioned the protests to most people in Philly, they said “oh, you mean those rioters burning all the cars,” because, of course, those were the images they saw on TV and in the papers. If we don't trust the media, why do we still accept the news as news?

The uprising started in February in response to a New Labor Law (CPE). Protests quickly spread across France, lasting through March and April, with massive marches and protests, school and university take-overs, street blitzes and blockades and numerous other actions. The CPE (First Employment Contract) ‘would have enabled employers to fire workers under the age of 26 at any time during their first two years of employment without needing to provide any justification or compensation.’^{1 2} And “would have made it possible to fire people because of their race or gender...or because they engaged in

radical activity, or simply because they were about to pass the two-year threshold and it would be cheaper to continually replace them with new ‘apprentice’ workers.” Workers in France have already seen hard fought for provisions and protections eroded as is happening all over Western Europe where the emphasis on free-market economics overrides social concerns and responsibilities. A sense of instability encouraged by widespread unemployment, especially among young people and immigrants (who staged their own uprising in France last Fall), has created what the French refer to as the pre'carariat “a vast underclass trapped in a limbo of temporary minimum-wage jobs, temporary unemployment benefits, panhandling or prostitution or petty crime when the benefits run out, and from there to incarceration in the rapidly expanding prison-industrial complex.”³ Sound familiar? Yet while similar concerns exist in the U.S. (which has the highest prison population in the world) the only reacting most to the precariousness of contemporary life (our minimum wage can hardly be called livable) are those most at risk: immigrants.

Along with the U.S. and Britain, France has a history of people's dissent alongside a history of governmental policies of imperialism, colonialism and oppression. The Paris Commune of 1871, the Paris Uprisings of '68 and the Movement of the Unemployed in 1998 all seriously challenged unequalitarian systems, in some cases shutting down and taking over entire sections of the city and country and encouraging radical tendencies such as self-management, direct democracy, worker's and student councils and assemblies and the freeing up of goods and services. Like the liberatory goals of the anarchists of Spain, such historical moments continue to inspire. France has a long philosophical tradition and on these occasions pamphlets such as Guy Debord's “Society of the Spectacle” and Raoul Vaneigem's “The Revolution of Everyday Life” encouraged a questioning and rethinking of values. The revolutionary spirit wasn't just about better wages but about re-imagining life. Possibilities for the “transformation of life” became visible and tangible. When students took over the Sorbonne in Paris in '68 their courage, pamphlets and spirit of joy and resistance encouraged nonstudents to revolt;

worker occupations of factories created a revolutionary situation. (For a similar situation in the U.S. see Detroit, I Do Mind Dying: An Urban Revolution, Dan Georgakas, 1998, South End Press)

A commonality running through all of these uprisings is the spirit of resistance to passivity, and social order: the notion that an unacceptable life must be accepted.

Many involved in the early spring uprisings have learned important lessons from the mistakes and failures of the past: betrayal by the left - in '68, by the French Communist Party (CGT) - complicity with the de Gaulle government, which prevented radical change or transformation - union leaders who negotiated with employers and the government. Other tactics, that these years activists tried to avoid, included cooption of “leaders,” disinformation, infiltration and physical repression - as well as the either/or choice of capitalism or communism? (as if no other alternatives exist).

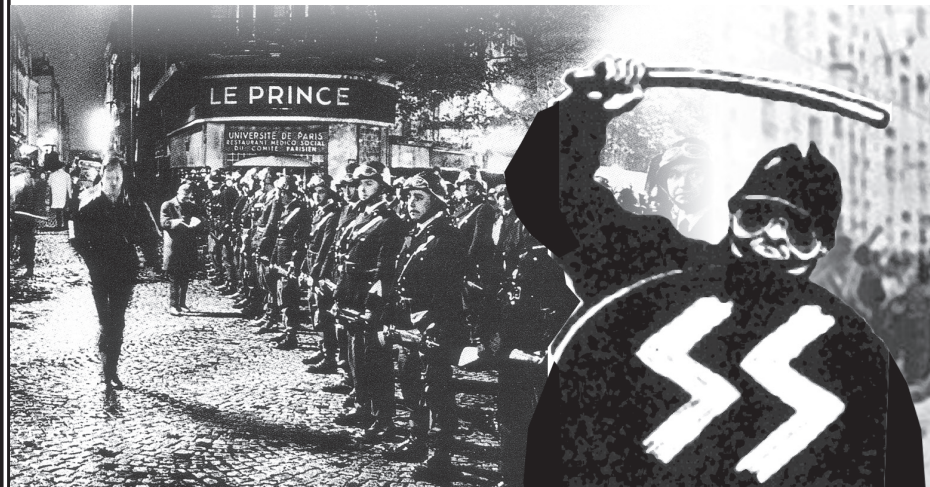
'06 - uprising - was both anti-traditional left and anti-capitalist - having been betrayed too many times by the left and influenced by more anarchist/anti-authoritarian strains of the anti-capitalist/anti-globalization movement, this uprising insisted upon decentralization “no leaders, or thousands of leaders” - rigorous democratic procedures, avoidance of the “good” protestor/“bad” protestor divisiveness (still so stifling here in the U.S. - resurgence of in the anti-war movement as older “peace” activists failed to acknowledge changes and younger/anti-auth. activists not joining groups out of distaste and not putting enough pressure on in terms of process) as well as acceptance of a “diversity of tactics.” Improvements in communication brought about by the internet and cell phones encouraged consciousness as well as independence - actions were relatively decentralized and did not have to be endorsed by a larger group. One of my personal favorites was the replacing of a city government flag with an anti-capitalist banner. Other actions included blitzes, which “represent a more aggressive (though usually still relatively nonviolent challenge to institutions and representatives of the ruling order. Countercultural revels can be a lot of fun, but they tend to contain a large element of self-satisfaction, complacently “celebrating” this or that social identity. Blitzes have a similarly playful and prankish spirit but the participants remain focused on their grievances, without illusions about the conditions in which they find themselves.”

To read more, check out the Bureau of Public Secrets website.

1 “Reflections on the Uprising in France,” Bureau of Public Secrets. 22 May 2006.

2 ibid

3 ibid



La Otra Campana continued from page 12

organizing to bring the vast majority of Mexicans with them. For the first time in their history, at the beginning of 2006, the Zapatistas celebrated New Years Day not with “Long Live the Zapatistas” but with “Long Live the Other Campaign.” And they celebrated by taking over the city of San Cristobal de las Casas in Chiapas just as they had done twelve years earlier but this time they were not two thousand armed rebels but rather tens of thousands of unarmed indigenous and mestizo Mexicans poised to launch a peaceful, civil movement to, in the words of Subcomandante Marcos, “... shake this country up from below, lift it up, and stand it on its head.”

And so, on New Years Day 2006, at the center of San Cristobal de las Casas, the indigenous comandancia who comprise the Sixth Commission handed over Subcomandante Marcos to tour the Mexican Republic promoting the Other Campaign and, most importantly, to meet, listen to and speak with those adherents to the Sixth Declaration who could not make it to last years’ meetings in Chiapas. Unarmed and with the civilian title of “Delegate Zero,” the safety of Subcomandante Marcos is in the hands of those adherents who are hosting him in each of the 31 states of Mexico, in Mexico City, and at the border. He will conclude the six-month tour with an informational plenary in Mexico City at the end of June before returning to Zapatista territory just days before the country’s July 2nd elections. In September, the next delegates of the Sixth Commission—members of the indigenous comandancia—are scheduled to fan out across Mexico, taking up more long-term residencies, each in their own state or region, and join, in person, the building of the Other Campaign.

Delegate Zero has just completed his tour of Puebla—the eighth state in his route—and so far over 1,000 political organizations of the left, indigenous groups and organizations, social, non-governmental and artistic organizations and collectives have publicly joined the Sixth Commission to build the Other Campaign for another way of doing politics,

an anticapitalist national plan of struggle, and a new constitution. In the backyard of our overextended empire, a revolution, from below and to the left, has already begun.

Go to www.ezln.org.mx to read and adhere to the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle and to communicate directly with the Sixth and Intergalactic Commissions of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation.

This article is dedicated to Comandante Ramona who passed away on January 6th of this year after a ten-year struggle with kidney cancer. A fierce organizer for women’s rights within the Zapatistas, Ramona led the EZLN fighters in taking San Cristobal de las Casas in 1994. Two years later, she broke the military encirclement of her communities and defied the arrest warrant issued against her to be the first Zapatista leader to leave Chiapas to speak with her Mexican brothers and sisters. On that visit, Comandante Ramona promised to them that she was just the first of many more to come. As usual, the Zapatistas are keeping their word.

“Stories from the Other Campaign” – more writings from Mexico by RJ Maccani

RJ sends thanks to the Ricardo Flores Magón Brigade and the whole Narco News team, to Ra for the edits and to everyone he interviewed in Oaxaca: Omar Olivera Espinosa, Heidi and Chucho, Gilberto Canseco, Elena, Alejandro Cruz, Laloó, Gustavo Esteva, Donaciana Antonio Almaráz and the whole Oaxacan State Coordination of the Other Campaign. He sends a special thanks to Steve Ankrom—without whose support he would’ve never made it to Oaxaca.

Katrina continued

lot of activists who just come in to New Orleans and are just pursuing their own things and aren’t very accountable to the communities. For one they’re helping the gentrification because they’re looking for housing. So they’re helping gentrify the area.

Atenco continued from page 11

symbol of popular protest in Mexico. The People’s Front have also had close ties with the Zapatistas in particular the Other Campaign.

Police response to the blockade was overwhelming: hundreds of state and federal police, most clad in riot gear, arrived to lift the blockade. Atenco resisted with machetes, clubs, Molotov cocktails and bottle rockets.

All told on Wednesday, over 50 people were injured and 100 detained by the police. Protestors took 11 police hostage, but released them to the Red Cross later in the evening. A fourteen year-old boy was shot in the chest and killed by the police that afternoon.

The next day the government began a siege on Atenco. By 6:30 am over three thousand police began wreaking havoc on the population, filling the streets, going from house to house, breaking windows and doors, pulling people into the street, beating them and then piling them in police vans and trucks. Several people who had participated as speakers in high-profile “Other Campaign” events in Mexico City were singled out and beaten. One woman who spoke in the Zocalo in Mexico City on May first was pulled into the street and kicked repeatedly in the groin. Between two and three hundred people were arrested. Many of whom were badly beaten and/or raped.

Zapatistas March to Atenco

Thursday in the evening the Zapatista Army of National Liberation and local labor and student organizations convoked a march for Friday at 4PM from the University of Chapingo to Atenco. The march started off small, about a thousand people, but grew as it moved

to around ten thousand.

Subcomandante Marcos restated his support for the rebels in Atenco.

“You are not alone,” he said, “We will continue carrying out mobilizations across the country until all the political prisoners are freed.”

He also accused the government of plotting the repression: why were the police ready to attack here if the problem was in Texcoco, he asked. “Because they want their airport once again, and they are coming for your land.”

High Tech Brutality

continued from page 6

man rights” card when attempting to isolate nations it is at odds with. This could cause the U.S. to seriously examine its policy of operating control units.

Prisoners, their families, and organizations that work with prisoners must participate in this campaign to abolish control units and expose their abuses. No longer should the U.S., which condemns the human rights abuses of other nations, be permitted to lecture to the world about human rights, freedom and justice from a podium of righteousness all the while standing on a platform of hypocrisy.

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SCI-Dallas
Dallas Pa 18612

*This article was written when the writer was housed in the Special Management Unit (Control Unit) at Sa-Greene in Pennsylvania.



Sustainability continued from page 10

size how much less control/power from above (corporations, the state, mainstream media) (and would anyone honestly miss these greedy assholes, besides themselves?) and much more from below is what will create health and sustainability – not, as the powers-that-be would have us believe, instability and fear. “The global financial system,” posited radical ecologist Patrick Reinsborough at a speech criticizing the WEF (World Economic Forum) in 2002, “Is an amoral and out-of-control machine that is largely incapable of seeing communities, ecosystems and cultures as anything other than resources to extract.” If we respond passively to this “machine” it will continue to roll over us and our environment.

Bookchin, like Lerner and Kunstler, argues that “the overriding problem is to change the structure of society so that people gain power. The best arena to do that is the municipality – the city, town and village – where we have an opportunity to create a face-to-face democracy. We can transform local government into popular assemblies where people can discuss and make decisions about the economy and society in which they live.” Sharing, bartering, gifting, cultivating, growing, all encourage hope and sustainability. Changing the ways we relate to each other and to the environment, becoming more active in deciding what we want our city to look/be like and taking responsibility for our behavior may help us prevent at least some of Kunstler’s worst-case scenarios.

This article was edited considerably for length. See the article in full at defenestrator.org

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nice place
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**People's War...
Women's War?**

**two texts by Comrade Parvati of the
Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
with commentary by Butch Lee**

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As long as private property remains women will always have to go back to tend individual household activities, maintaining private property for men, no matter how many social revolutions take place. Hence the concept of continuous revolution until one reaches communism has strategic relevance for women (Com. Parvati)

Inner-party struggle may often appear in the form of gender, ethnic, regional struggle. Hence the gender issue becomes quite an important component of the class issue. In such a case dismissing the gender issue as an alien force will ultimately affect class struggle (Com. Parvati)

Kersplebedeb Publishing June 2006 - 70 pages - ISBN 1-894946-21-9

Monday August 21st
Workshop on Herbal Medicine
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm -- Roxborough Free Public Library, 6245 Ridge Ave.

Tuesday August 22
A National Health Care Day of Action! --
18,000 people die each year because they don't have health insurance.
11:00 AM at Plaza at Philadelphia City Hall (West side, Market St.)

Wednesday, August 23rd
Global Warming's Impacts on the Delaware Valley August 24th 2006 6:30 pm -- Academy of Natural Sciences 19th Street and Ben Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia

Friday August 25
The Human Rights Coalition's Poems Not Prisons presents a Benefit for Hasan Shakur! Poetry Reading/Open Mic
Bring your songs, poems, short stories, announcements and rants!
7:30 at the A-space

Saturday August 26th
Street Movies!
8:00 pm - 10:30 at the Friends Neighborhood Guild; 8th and Fairmount, Philadelphia ; info: 215-923-1544 ext. 120

Radical Calendar

People's Movietime showing of "Anarchism in America" (1982)
Wooden Shoe Books 7:30 pm

August 27, 2006
Open Forum on Mumia Abu-Jamal
3pm at the Mantis School of Boxing at 4522 Baltimore Ave.

First-Ever Festival for Gender Equality!
Connect! Create! Educate!
11am- 4pm at Von King Park in Brooklyn, NY
info:http://www.gges.info/latest-news.php

Monday, August 28th
Public Forum, "The Middle East and Africa in Crisis
6:30pm at Uhuru Solidarity Center, 3733 Lancaster Ave info: apscuhuru.org

Saturday August 30
Sweet Candy Zine Library open hours -- @
Alternative Arts Center 1508 S. 4th St Philadelphia, PA 19147 8:30 -- 10 pm
www.eyecandyzine.com

Saturday September 2nd

Clark Park People's Flea Market

Friday, September 8th
Taller Puertorriqueno's Art Nights in the Barrio
6:00 pm - 8:30 pm between Huntingdon and Indiana on 5th info: 215-423-6320

Saturday, September 9
The People's Movietime showing: The Free Voice of Labor - The Jewish Anarchists (1980) -
7:30pm @ Wooden Shoe Books,

Tuesday September 12
Political Prisoner Leonard Peltier's Birthday

Thursday, September 21
Media Justice Comes of Age
Join us for Media Tank's 5th Anniversary Party! 7:00-10:00 @ Philadelphia Ethical Society, 1906 Rittenhouse Square

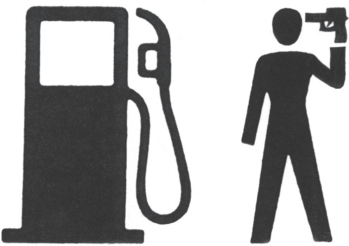
Friday September 22
Public Forum on Racism in the Middle East and at home
7 PM at LAVA 4134 Lancaster Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143 -- 609.558.1869

Sunday, September 24
Philly Zine Fest
noon-6pm at the Rotunda
4014 Walnut Street
philadelphiazinefest.com

Saturday, October 14
Clark Park People's Flea Market

November 17-19
Vigil to Close the School of the Americas, in Fort Benning, Georgia info: www.SOAW.org

November 30 and December 1
A Social Research Conference
At The New School for Social Research
Join us as we examine the foundations of our ideas of punishment, explore the social effects of current practices and search for viable alternatives to our carceral state.
info: www.socres.org



Ongoing Events and Meetings

Food Not Bombs
In a country hungry for war, that bombs countries hungry for food..
Rain or shine: Servings areSundays at 5:00PM and Mondays at 7:00PM across from the Free Library on Vine Street between 19th and 20th Streets
In West Philly : sharings happen every Wednesday @ 5pm-CEDAR PARK (50th and Baltimore) for more info, see

Women's Anti-Violence Education (WAVE)
Monday drop-in classes every Monday night from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Friend.s Center; 1501 Cherry Street Phone: 215-241- 5720 for more information

WAVE offers a drop-in, self-defense, class every Monday night. There is a sliding scale fee of \$5-\$20(pay what you can). Women of any age, size, or physical ability will benefit. Can't make it Monday? call about our full length self-defense courses offered regularly.

ACT UP
Weekly Meeting Every Monday from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm St. Lukes Church; 330 S. 13th St. (between Pine & Spruce) Email: actupphilly@ critpath.org for more info.

Weekly Meeting of Phila. County Coalition on Prison Health Care

Every Tuesday from 9:30-10:30 a.m.
Philadelphia FIGHT office, 1233 Locust St., 2nd floor, For info, contact Laura McTigh: 215-380-5556

Books Through Bars
Packing Café Every Tuesday from 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm The A Space; 4722 Baltimore Ave. E-mail: info@booksthroughbars.org for more info

International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia
Every Thursday from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm 4601 Market St., 5th floor Phone: 215-476- 5416 for more info.

Philadelphia Anti-War Forum
Meeting Third Sunday of every month from 1:00

pm - 3:00 pm Aspace; 4722 Baltimore Ave and first Thurs. at Last Drop Coffee. E-mail: clanarchy@prodigy.net

INCITE! Radical Women of Color
Calling Radical Women of Color
Philly INCITE! Starting in December Philly INCITE is meeting each 1st & 3rd
Thursday from 6:30-7:45pm at the A-Space

PRAWN (Philadelphia Regional Anti-War Network)
Meets 1st Tues. at Local 4, AFSCME, 1606 Walnut.
6:30-9pm www.prawnworks.net

Liberated Spaces

LAVA
The Lancaster Avenue Autonomous Zone is a center for radical media and organizing located at 4134 Lancaster Avenue in the Belmont neighborhood of West Philadelphia. info: 215.387.6155 or info@lavazone.org * lavazone.org

A-Space - a collectively run anarchist gallery and meeting/community space. Events are free and generally start at 7:30pm unless otherwise noted. Accessible by the 34 trolley. Plenty of parking for cars and bikes. They pass the hat to cover rent.
4722 Baltimore Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19143
215.727.0882 a-space@defenestrator.org

WOODEN SHOE BOOKS and RECORDS - Anarchist bookstore owned and run by an unpaid collective of geniuses with nothing better to do than sit around talking philosophy and riots. Carries a wide range of anarchist and radical books, periodicals, pamphlets, T-shirts, patches, CD's records etc.
508 S. Fifth Street Philadelphia, PA

215.413.0999 woodenshoe@rocketmail.com

Firehouse Bikes- A worker owned collective bike shop. 50th and Baltimore

The Divine Bicycle Church - Bike repair co-op at Neighborhood Bike Works. Tools,advice and recycled parts available. Every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from 6:30-9pm
40th and Locust Walk, behind St. Mary's Church

Crossroads Women's Center- open Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-2pm or by appointment
33 Maplewood Mall, Germantown 215-848-1120

The Friends Center - American Friends Service Committee HQ. Contains meeting spaces and offices for a gazillion different entities.
1501 Cherry Street

the defenestrator
PO Box 30922
Philadelphia, PA 19104

to: